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the calvert review

Note from the Editor

This spring issue of the Calvert Review represents a selection of the best poems, short stories, and literary criticism submitted by students at the University of Maryland. The Calvert Review has an important role to fulfill; it reflects not only an interest in literature, but the spirit of imagination and the active creativity of today's university student. Maximum freedom of expression is the key to a healthy university, and it is this goal that we continue to serve.

I personally dedicate this issue to Dr. Rudd Fleming. He has been an inspiration to me, and has helped many others to realize their creative abilities during his years at the university.

—Peter Benoit

the calvert review

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Thomas P. Nugent

In October he worked the fountain. Leaves scattered in the wind blowin past the drugstore. Behind him the radio barked out football games, and he could im agine the distant field, shadow-patterned and crisp with the snap of pennants in th wind. Guys came in and out. They slouched grimly in the counter seats, talking onl among themselves. He told them too loudly about McClendon fumbling on the Ne braska seven, and the fake field goal just before the half ended. They rarely looke at his bright face. He shuttled back and forth between them with a nervous rag trying harder. Finally they would turn away altogether. Often he was entirely alon behind the crowded counter, and he wondered just what it was they resented

His uncle was blunt-faced, a stubby man who coughed at people. He and th aunt had scraped and saved, finally managed to buy the drugstore right at the end o the Depression. They had raised the boy since he was five.

"Tom—pay your own way and you're O.K. That's what I always say!" Anc the uncle beamed.

He knew many of these sayings, constantly reminded Tom about working anc respecting himself for it.

"Yes sir," Tom would answer, looking back at him from the fountain. The uncle rubbed his hands together, clacked his teeth, and was all set for solid, red-blooded work.

His aunt had been a pretty woman. Now she spent most of her time upstairs and once in a while he heard her giggling over the bottles of old perfume she kep in her dresser. She was very kind to the boy, and he liked her. The years hac taught his aunt a strange patience; she seemed a little frantic, and sometimes her laughter sounded like broken music. At fourteen he already felt sorry for her

One Saturday Harper Godsey came in and tried to steal from the drugstore It was another October day, bright ice wrinkling the early grass. He looked up once when Godsey came into the store, then went back to washing the glasses. Harper Godsey was a red-headed kid who had never been in trouble, and Tom was stunnec when he looked up again. Godsey was slipping a pen and pencil set into his jacket pocket. Tom watched, not moving. Godsey looked around carefully, then darted a watch into the same pocket. He turned and looked into Tom's face. Godsey flushed, not knowing whether he had been seen or not. Then he moved toward the fountain. His face looked sickly. Tom knew he was fighting back the fear. He sat at the counter.

"Coke."

Tom got him the coke. He watched Godsey drumming the counter with nervous fingers. Tom decided to give him the coke, then go back and tell his

A THEFT TO BEGIN WITH

uncle. He slid the coke at Godsey; Godsey slid him a dime back, keeping his eyes down.

Tom took a step and paused. He looked around. There was no one else at the fountain. Woodsmoke rustled on the wind blowing into the drugstore. He took another step, and began to remember the time when he had first learned about stealing.

He was seven and on his way to Catechism Class. There was no Catholic school in the town, so on Saturdays he went with other kids to the Nun's house on Varnum Street.

The nuns were little women with wrinkle-netted faces. They scampered piously along the sidewalks, and if you spoke they looked away from your eyes, then moved on soundlessly. But in the little green room at the convent, it was a different story.

"Why did God make you?"

"God made me to know, love and serve him."

Outside a squirrel flashed past the window, intent on acorns. He could not watch it long—the nun almost always caught him and then popped his knuckles with her big ruler. The room was seasoned with chalk dust, and when he looked at the big, dog-eared catechism in his hands he was not certain what the lesson meant. Little girls would rise with shiny, blinking eyes and insist:

"O Sister, I always confess all my venial sins, even though we don't have to "

The Nun would smile softly, doing God's work and happy. The chalk dust settled, his mind wandered, and Saturday slowly passed.

But this Saturday he did not go. He was afraid, walking down Franklin Street with thrills skittering through his stomach. Secret air chilled his mysterious face. (He might just be off on something a little dangerous.)

The town trees rattled like bones above him. The air was charged with woodsmoke, laced with frost. It was his day!

He stepped in front of the Magic Theatre. It was a place he rarely went, and he loved it better than anything else. The marquee lights ran back and forth—deep blues and golds blinking out.

The Durango Kid. (Said slowly, in his mind, in a terribly low voice.)

He ached to be inside, where he could stare, huge-eyed, at the crisp flicker of black and white Durango Kid racing leather-creak through dynamite mines. He had a nickel; money for the milk-break at Catechism. It took a dime.

He wondered about it, pale with embarrassment, stealing glances at fat owl-face the ticket-taker. She was a heavy woman with flat eyes.

Finally he stepped up, afraid but desperate. The ticket-taker woman's no seemed blue behind the shadowed glass. Neither of them moved. The wom blinked back at him, waiting. When she began to speak, he cut her off. The wor sputtered in his choking throat.

"Only have a nickel," he almost whimpered.

"What?" She hadn't heard him, leaned forward in his face. Again, silenc Then:

"I said . . . said I only have a nickel."

The tension was awful—he could feel his face burning.

"For what?"

He was stunned. He had expected her to know.

"For in there." He pointed the nickel toward the big, leather-smelli doors through which he could barely hear the deep burblings of the Durango Ki

"Oh," she said, settling back. "Costs a dime, Sonny."

He could stand it no longer. He raced to the corner, turned it in one lo shudder, and got out of her sight.

But he was back, like a moth, in five minutes.

This time she saw him coming, but did not move. She was thick—God l hated her guts!

He leaned into the window now, hardly ashamed, too wounded to even fe the pain.

"Say—think I could watch half of it with the nickel?"

She leaned toward him. She felt motherly. He saw food stuck between h teeth. She was going to let this cute little thing go to the movies, money or n money (He knew it now, hated her, just wanted to get through those doors

"Tell you what, Sonny." Her voice hissed through the money-screen. "Yo just go right on in there." She beamed at him, very happy. He muttered somethin stumbled away red-faced, and at first could not open the big doors. Finally the whooshed open and he was inside.

He gasped. The air flickered blue and black, like the inside of a shadow scattered cave. He walked across the lobby, eyes already on the screen. The Du rango Kid was on a burning roof, bullets singing through windows, smashing glas The boy's mouth fell open and he walked forward numbly. They were going to g the Kid—didn't have a chance!

Suddenly a hand scratched at his arm, stung him with surprise. He jumpe back and looked into the face of the crippled usher.

"Ticket, buddy. Where's yer ticket."

Oh, no, he thought, and knew he wasn't safe yet. At that moment he thoug of home, wondering if his uncle would catch him, and felt a stab of fear. The ushe was peering at him, leaning forward, his face withered like an old apple.

"C'mon buddy, ticket." The usher waved his hand with irritation. He wasn taking any wise talk from these kids.

"She said I didn't have to." He looked at his shoes.

"Didn't have to!" The usher took off, stumping along on his crippled leg crinkled mouth set with responsibility. He opened the back door of the ticket boot and he and the woman whispered together. They were staring at him. He wante to hide, but there was nowhere to go. Finally the usher came back, looked aroun grimly, and motioned to the boy.

"Follow me, and keep yer trap shut." He gave the boy a look fraught with nger, then led the way through the door. They stopped behind the waist-high wall the back of the theatre.

"Now stay here, you can't go in them seats without a ticket. And watch it."

"Thanks, Mister," he said.

"Yeah," the usher answered, "but watch it!" He hobbled dramatically away.

It was really something. By now the entire roof was in flames, and the Durango Kid was racing back and forth, looking for his horse in the street below. But e crooks had tied the horse to a hitching post. He was straining to get away, rashing and plunging. The boy danced back and forth.

C'mon go. Let's go—C'mon hurry!

The face of the Durango Kid was hard as a granite block, and the muscles ere twitching along his jaw. That horse had to get away!

Suddenly he did, and raced down the street with silver mane flying. All ong the street the outlaws dropped to one knee, firing at the horse with both nds. But they missed—and the horse flew back up the street. The Durango id leapt just as the roof crashed into sparks. The flames roared high into the ir, somewhere dynamite went off. But the Kid was on his horse, and already half-ay to the mountains.

He was breathless. There had never been anything like it. But when the ovie ended, was finally over, he felt again the thrill and tug of fear. What would is uncle do?

It was colder out in the street. The wind crackled papers against him. He ad an hour before it was time to go home. He walked along the sidewalk, listening ith his mind to the smack of remembered bullets. He paused in front of Wool-orth's. The window was covered with dust and peeling, stippled paint. Through ie door he could see rows of bright plastic toys. Glinting cap guns, shiny metalic purs lined the shelves. He went in to look at the stuff.

He walked around for several minutes. It was exciting to imagine the fun he ould have with some of these things, and as he walked he figured how he would nake a lot of money later on. Might even be his store one day. He smiled a little t that, him owning the store, then stopped next to a display of play money. He eached out, snapped a pack of the crisp, starched bills against his hand. They elt good, and a little important, even though he knew it was only play money.

The idea came suddenly, and sent a chill of fear snaking down his back. tight next to the door. Hold 'em by your side. He was moving, his mind scream-ng, feeling all their eyes bore out at him. He waited for the shouts, the clamp of steel on his wrists.

Suddenly he was safe, out on the street. He had walked almost two blocks efore he thought of his uncle's nubbed, rigid face, and called himself a thief.

They ate dinner at twilight—New England dinner of squat franks and fat, syrup-thickened beans. The sun hung in the kitchen window, dusk-mottled and ale. He watched long shadows filter through the grass. The uncle sat to his ight, eating with locked, stubby teeth. His aunt ate primly, as always, taking ragile, straight-backed bites.

"Father Coughlin wants me . . ." The uncle burgled through bread drip-ings. "Wants me for midnight mass. Head of the ushers." He bent again over he droppings.

"O my; dear." The aunt placed her hand on his arm, half-smiled, wit- drew the hand. The boy twitched. The air was tight around him. An hour a his aunt had seen the play money—her eyebrows had flickered.

"Oh," he blurted. "Oh, Dennis Reardon gave it to me. At Catechism

"How nice," his aunt quivered once. The money looked awfully ne

"Yes," his uncle continued. He would talk and pause, talk and pause. between they waited for him to eat.

"Huge crowd. They've already started with the pageant. Choir rehearsi too."

"Oh, I just love Midnight Mass at Christmas." The aunt scattered wor like bits of bright crystal. They glimmered for a moment and then went o

"In New Hampshire we used to ride in a big sled to Mass. It had bells she added.

Dinner buzzed in his stomach. In a minute he knew the telephone would rin The play money was in the top of his closet. He could see it in his mind. The bil were already crumpling, a few of them were dirty. The telephone would ring a he was going to get caught. Behind him curtains snickered in the wind. He w going to cry, struggled against it with aching, bean-gulped swallows.

"Well dear," his aunt asked brightly. "How was business today?"

His uncle settled back. The boy knew this question, fell into the routine of

"Difficult." The uncle nodded carefully. Drama crept into the room. T uncle said "Difficult" again, but the word was belched in half. This hurt the effe and so he paused a little longer than usual before saying: "The life is not easy. He rocked slightly. "The life is not easy. But we've come a long way, haven't w you and I, Margaret?"

The boy did not like this. He watched a dog cross the lawn, loping throu shadow-patches.

"Yes Charles. We have. We have come a long way." His aunt's face r flected a million years of dramatic suffering.

The telephone rang. His aunt got up to answer it. There was a long paus The uncle continued chewing, eyes straight ahead.

"Oh yes Sister. Good evening," the aunt half-gasped. She stood with h back to the table, and the boy could see it slowly stiffening as she talked.

"Oh but he was there!" the aunt insisted.

The boy flinched. He knew instantly what the Nun was asking, could imagi her face pale-puckered and creeping with eyebrows as she told his aunt. The fo was pulpy: a thick paste glutting his hot throat. He struggled. Nausea gleam in the bright kitchen light around him. The aunt was beginning to tremble.

"Then he . . . wasn't there?"

The uncle's eyes rose slowly, crossed the table, and froze against his fac There was no sound in the room. Dusk slippered the windows. Outside, the tre were slant-angled and stark against the sky. The boy cringed against his uncle eyes. Together they listened to his aunt.

"Yes. Yes Sister. I'll tell Charles."

Another pause.

"Oh yes. He will be there next Saturday. Good night, Sister."

The aunt hung up and turned around. She was pale; for a moment he thoug she might scream.

"He wasn't there." Her voice was very soft. "He didn't go to Catechism."

No one moved. The uncle ground his jaws slowly.

"Why didn't you go?" He asked.

The boy hated the only answer he could give.

"I don't know," he almost whispered. Suddenly the thick uncle-hand lashed at his nose. He jumped against the blunt surprise of knuckles. His face throbbed the blinking light.

"Please Charles, please!" his aunt squealed, close to tears. "Don't hurt m. Don't hurt the boy!" She bit at a finger, shaking.

"Where did you go?" The uncle grappled at his arm.

"To the movies. I went to the movies." He shuddered, fearing the hand. slashed out at him again. The room flickered red; his eyes stung beneath the blow.

"You didn't have any money. How did you go to the movies?" The uncle ose, his breath rattling on the air. "You didn't have any money!"

"Oh!" The aunt gasped. "The play money. The play money! He said . . ." er hands twitched and jerked in front of her face. Suddenly she realized, and her yes swelled hugely, glittering in the nervous liquid of their sockets.

The boy was frantic. He writhed inside the clutch of his uncle. The room wam with terror.

"I stole. I stole!" He sank into hopeless, shivering sobs.

But the aunt was trying to save him.

"Charles," she said. Her voice was breathless, rasping.

"Charles. He brought home some play money. He said a boy gave it to him t Catechism. He must have gotten it at the five and ten. Don't hurt him Charles. le won't do it again." The aunt was crying now as hard as he was. "I know he von't do it again. Don't hurt the boy, Charles."

The uncle turned. It had been explained too fast; he understood only that the oy had stolen.

"So you stole, eh, boy. A rotten dirty little thief around here, huh?" His voice rose, almost to a shout. "I stole once, when I was a boy. My father caught ne, and you know, boy, you know, I never stole again. The uncle thrust his stubby ace against the boy's. His eyes were smoking. "Well, you're not going to either! Margaret, turn on the stove," he said.

The boy went numb. His eyes bulged. The uncle's face filled everything, twisted, working. The aunt had not moved. Her mouth was open.

The uncle turned on the stove himself. The gas hissed up, puffed into flame.

"This," the uncle said softly, "is how we teach thieves to keep their hands to themselves." The boy fought uselessly.

His hand was in the fire for only a second. The bright heat seared into his fingers, and then his uncle let him go. They stood facing each other for a moment.

"I hope you have learned honesty now," the Uncle said. He was breathing more slowly. "I just want to know one thing, and then you can go to bed."

He paused. The boy stared at him. The gas jet slickered quick shadows on the wall. By now the yard was completely dark.

"Why did you steal?"

The boy gulped.

"I wanted . . ." Now he tried to answer. "I wanted . . ."

In the back of his mind he saw again the Durango Kid, granite-faced, leaping through burning dynamite, crisp-flicking, alive with the creak of shifting leather.

And he hardly remembered sitting an hour later in his pajamas, just before he went to sleep, counting the play money savagely, shaping the bills with his corrected, his burnt hand.

Harper Godsey was getting up, anxious to escape. He took a step.

"Hold it Godsey," Tom said. His voice was low and menacing, a surprise. Godsey turned back toward him. He looked Godsey right in the eyes.

"I saw you take the stuff."

Godsey paled, swallowing with twitches.

"Look," he said. "Look I was joking. It was just a joke. The guys told me to do it—I wasn't going to take the stuff out. It was just a joke with the guys." The words were blurred; they sounded dry. Godsey was scared. He jerked the things back out of his jacket and put them on a shelf. His face was tight.

Tom turned away. Godsey almost ran out of the drug-store. A few minutes later his uncle came out of the back room, chuckling, rubbing warts.

"Oh yes," he said. "Ah yes! Another day—another dollar!"

"Yes sir," Tom answered. He went back to work.

FUNERAL IMPRESSION

There are floating people laughing
heads bent back-----
There are battered shoes and gawky Parrots

Slumped in gray molded shirts
Old men in straight-backed wicker chairs
Stare phantoms in their head faded eyes
half-bald
Their necks are wrought and lined eternal

We do not see the disproportioned ear
-the yellow sun setting-
the dried mud callus

The mountain is a blue nude
The highlights of breast and thigh snow music
-twisting chords of muscle wind

There are men screaming in the fog
It is the fog of late evening hysteria

Sorrow straight tight lipped
The laughing priest with round
Brimmed hat leapt behind
The mountain steadily staring out
Unmoving once more golden
Sun hung setting

There are black cloaked figures
Standing in twos and threes
About the courtyard
-one stands very close
pressing in my face and eyes
On the grass a whistling head bent boy
Stands hands in pockets----
Many more also dancing

The shadows and streams of light
Have both spoken to me
They say feel but I have
Countless watched in that dark room
-out the window
And I answer
I say angel
One hair drifting down slowly
It is the mystic oceans!

The colorless waters!
The silent surf---the vacuum
That I embrace---- I lay one hand numb
And look for words to drip
From the walls around the bed of ashes
-lacquered bronze girl
head cocked over left shoulder
-there are sun-warped candles
the smell of old wood, wax
-old papers of dreams!

The lady of the man sits
Bespeckeled by the Alabama barn
There are no animals I have won
Until the sun bursts on rooftops
-a pacing horse in the farmyard
-a visions of multicolored
riders and pigeons, cats
and the surf of the sea
the mane of the rocking toy horse
red of smiling hair sickening

Two figures held the umbrella against the snow
One placed flowers by the leaning
Frosted-- bent trees in
The distance-- tombstones

The director exalted standing on a snow-covered
bench arms spread ---
The child freezes in the field

There is a violence, there is pity
There is tender
There are frowning nuns
And gasping peasants

The blind one eyed lady, lace covered face
Wrapped in furs walked her hideous dogs in the globular room

A balding man stares
from the screened and rat-wired window
-a crumbled picture
transfused into the ground
His eyes in shadows

The shadow and the streams of light are silent

—Joseph Cardarelli

(AND THE I,
THAT I DID NOT KNOW SO WELL)

And the I, that I did not know so well
conceived with Fury.
And out of their union came a God.
While I, who lived in Solitude,
not knowing the I,
    Who conceived and yield God,
    Nor the God, who came from this union,
came to find the God and understand my union.

For Fury wrote to me that God
was waiting by the river's edge.
The river that ran below the bridge
that I crossed while balancing on a camel's back,
ran swiftly by me till I reach it's edge.
And there I came to meet God,
Whom now I house within.

—*Harris Leonard*

B. S. B. Hasse

Gigi Flower runs down the wrinkles of my gray mind, a whisper of memo a wisp of blue shorts dashing up Ninth Avenue—her shoes clapping against her he and echoing across the hollow streets, damp ends of her hair flopping off the ba of her neck—a shrug in front of delicatessen windows decorated with skinned rabb and pigs hanging purple side by side and laughter, always laughter, around h mouth. I should have stayed for a moment in the dusty summer park but I didn

You could laugh with Gigi and rustle her ears and bite her on the shoulder swing her around in the middle of the sidewalk going up the street. We yelled the buildings, bumping against each other on the way to a Forty-second Stre movie and kidded over hot dogs that were hung with krout. I should have savor a moment in that last, dusty green square of park before hurrying, shirt sleev flopping, to Barbara's room: a modern fashion of ancient furniture with its pin canopied bed. I could hear Gigi tapping and laughing far away over that pink canop laughing deep a woman's fertile laughter, wiping her nose, sitting her carele rump down anywhere, much too busy enjoying her life.

I can see Barbara sitting on the pink bedspread, her long legs and arms car fully placed, waiting. Barbara draped on a pedestal always combing her hair a gently applying her lip-stick. Barbara, who should have been a tiny china figure a throne in a society park of tall hedges under clear, untouchable glass. Yo couldn't laugh with Barbara. It would ruffle her powder or loosen her hair. Yo couldn't hold her hands; she saved them for beauty against a dark dress. Yo couldn't laugh and you couldn't run. But there were other things you could do wi Barbara.

If Barbara was really a spider, she knew how to kill you slowly with that kir of degraded joy the dark one's shadows cover best. Oh yes, we tangled. And o yes, then she would laugh, gurgling down deep in her throat. But she tiptoe around the edges too long before plunging us over the side.

"Don, we con't do it anymore."

Her hand on my arm, her fingers diddling among the hairs.

"It's wrong. We mustn't do it."

Sitting on the bed running her fingers down my neck.

"Don, I can't let you do it."

Spiderly moving. How could I resist?

"But I love you, Barbara. I respect you," I would say halfheartedly; a old response.

GIGI FLOWER, GIGI BIRD

"You're so good Barbara. How can I help but love you."

This thumped falsely even against my own ears.

Finally the call sounded that would drag me to arms: "Oh you do love me so. How can I refuse you? Come into the bed. But be gentle."

Gentle! Over the side we would tumble, she dragging me, wrestling across the bed as if hell were arriving tomorrow. Loving Barbara was like riding a bucking horse in a snowstorm. And you never knew which way she would jump. But there was the other Barbara, afterwards, when she wouldn't let me smoke, reaching out desperately—sex her only hold, sophistication her retreat. I felt sorry when I left her looking up out of a face she almost successfully molded into scorn, her eyes asking for some kindness I couldn't dredge up because of the look around them. She never allowed herself to ask, but I knew she not only wanted me to come back soon, but not to leave at all. And I can see this happening over and over in her bedroom with the men who enter it, and how sad it must really be for her, which must be the reason she tears so wildly across that bed, reaching for whatever straws of contact she can. She's trapped within a crust neither she nor I have the strength to break away.

Gigi. I called her Gigi Flower sometimes for many reasons: because she laughed out of an open face bent to the sun, because she bloomed even on the spittle-dried sidewalks and because she held something in the palm of her fertility. And Gigi Bird. I called her that too when she would go swooping, arms back for wings, down the street.

Suddenly and no wonder I had met Gigi when I stumbled off a bar stool that hot drenched evening and she was there laughing with the other girls, an arm under mine, helping me up to sit in front of six cups of coffee which she bought and made me drink. I had seen her and watched her but hadn't expected to meet her falling my way to a closet toilet that could smell no less than hell could ever on a summer evening. They laughed, those sure-footed working girls with their broad base on this earth. Then she helped me back to my third floor room and wrote down the hall phone number so she could call me from work the next day to be sure I was all right. She was nice like that. Later, when New York had arched its back and accepted all my money, she bought me drinks, let me money and played the records I liked on juke boxes. But we lived high when I had my money and lived high when I didn't, because that was her way.

"How are you?" she asked the next day, her voice metalized by the phone.

"Fine. Where do you live?"

But she wouldn't, teasing, tell me. I would have to find her myself.

So they laughed, those sure-footed working girls the night before. And announced, "I have to be helped to my room . . . I'll never find it alone."

"Oh, ho ho ho."

"No, I'm not being sly. But you help me, Gigi. We'll get there all right alone. No need to disturb the others. You girls sit tight. We'll find it all right together, won't we Gigi?"

But she wouldn't come into the room with me. And so when I saw it was useless, I said, "I'm sorry. Really. Yes, I'm a liar. But I'm very lustful when I've been drinking."

She laughed and patted me on the head but when I brushed her with my hand she smacked me on the head. A light bonk, though, another laugh and she was gone leaving me on the edge of a homeless bed that growled when I moved around on it and liked me as little as I like it. A brown bed in a faded room that I had hoped to bring a little extra warmth to that night.

I remembered the whore I brought home from a bar the last time I was in New York because a young man needs a little warmth sometimes, the thick of a woman's thighs lost with him beneath the sheets. And a whore can do all the pretending for him.

"Dreamy eyes. Horseman. You Bulltail. Oh you . . . you're . . . oh oh oh you're ever. You're gone. Oh love. Oh you love."

It was her job to pretend, not mine. And after it was over and she had come back from the bathroom, she climbed back under the sheets—the fusty sheets which I then had to face alone for the rest of the night, to sleep between the heat of my own degradation—for a quiet moment of warmth and camaraderie.

"You're so young," she said.

Her face was dusted with little lines, when you looked closely, like unold tar.

"Young as this room. Young as the torn flowers on that wallpaper and old as your folded belly."

"Oh you talk . . . your talk. Oh you love. But I have to go soon."

"Time is money," I quoted heartily.

"Call me again."

I couldn't sleep after she was gone and had to open the window to get the smell of us out of the room.

Now here I was in New York again. Two weeks from anywhere I was secure, in another brown casket of a room, sitting on a box under a cold breeze that was blowing all the futile remnants of human contact—Gigi's clean, woman smell and my liquid breath—out of the room. Wondering, my mind stumping about over logs of thought: where would I find this Gigi again? Remembering the whore, her orange slip-over last seen with ruffles bouncing behind, I'm figuring to see Gigi the next night early at the same bar, which sure enough I did. We talked. And then we were off through the streets running.

Running at the weeks and laughing over a future somewhere in a dusty park we couldn't see.

Running with her while Barbara, always Barbara, pulled me back by that spidery thread around my vitals. And ultimately, between them and the city and their two kinds of love, they unraveled me: Gigi with the rope of her honest lustiness and Barbara by the thread of my lust. But Barbara's love was lower than the

hore's because she demanded not money but a yielding of love, a lying love, false s her skinny belly, that tasted foul on my lips and in my throat and down in the pit f my prosaic bowels where such lies are created and guided up.

Yes, Gigi laughed. Yes, Gigi laughing. And me to be a child with an empty eat saved for a loving Christ who is there with us in the seat I save beside me. hrist who loves the little children, who doesn't tell them to stop being themselves, stop getting dirty which is their nature, to stop scratching themselves but loves s sitting around his legs while he tells us good stories we can almost understand, is brown beard waving. Christ of the kindness. Christ of the child.

But was that me, a child running beside Gigi laughing? Both of us children aughing, running down the streets and up the streets, standing for a moment below ie Empire State Building, looking up with awe under the neon-sprinkled night hough we've seen it a hundred times or more and finally with a wag of her tail she ismisses it as ineffable.

The next night, with a balcony full of diseased bums ("Bleak, weak, bleary-eary bums," she chuckled into my ear. But nice. They're sad.") we watched two orty-second Street horror films. They were snoring and spitting around us while , the happiest bum of all, sat with a cigarette burning my fingernails. We smoked iercely and poked each other, chuckling at ridiculous little jokes between us. We ouldn't stop our infectious laughing and soon the whole balcony of beery bums, and oon the whole theatre was roaring while the woman in the movie chopped people n half gigantically in front of our eyes. None of us with anything to laugh for and lenty to crouch in an alley puking the bloody sputum of our lives over—laughing nd couldn't stop laughing; the whole theatre, united, roaring at its own spittle and racked walls and rotted plaster of lives. But it was dark and there was no one to ee but ourselves, all of us lifted for a moment out of our sleeping pretense, our elf-confidence and no-confidence and hustle and ennue. Not the smiles that are eady to crack any second on our faces but real laughter from the belly, that inside lace of hidden warmth.

The laughter receded, washed into quiet in the darkness and we slowly rifted back into the life of the screen while Gigi sat gurgling with happiness, her heeks bulging with it, trying to hold it back but she couldn't, and started the waves f laughter all over again. The purity of it enveloped everybody, translating them ut of their filthy thrones, purging and uplifting them.

At the end of the second feature she ran outside ahead of me—that flower-ird woman-thing who rested with the earth, flowed with it and knew it, who though t the time hadn't produced yet was as ripe and fertile as an apple blossom—and ought tickets to the movie next door because she knew I didn't have much money eft. We sat in the cigarette smoke of the balcony and, between our own huffings nd puffings, we made the first timid explorations of love.

Then at three-thirty that morning we ran down to Eighth Avenue, our eyes strained from the movies and the smoke, to the bar where we met and smiled over eers at our foolish, grinning faces.

Barbara, oh you Barbara. You should have left us alone. I blame Barbara ut it was me and the thread of her body sleek with powder. The smell of her, though she didn't sweat, was all over the bed and with me long after. I blame Barbara but it was me who got out of bed the next morning, my throat cigarette-fuzzy, and climbed on a subway to Long Island so I wouldn't have to stay alone in that hot

room which was cramped by my frigidbed. I had known Barbara from before, fro the depth of my snowy past, from the first time I went to New York. A frien of my mother hadgiven me Barbara's mother's name and told me to visit them whil I was there. I was eighteen and a bit cherubic when she opened the door—instea of a straw hat and a handful of flowers, I carried the bouquet of gossip my mother' friend had entrusted into my care—and she must have seen in my face an innocer past that consisted only of vague wonderings. At nineteen, she knew more than mus ing could have ever taught me. But for whatever reason, she valiantly undertoo my education without fear of any barrier a fumbling student might place against her This may be the reason New York has become, to me, a sexual city, why in spit of the unconcerned hardness of the city, the building up and tearing down—all th variations that make that city—its foundation, its girders are sex. She never loos ened that thread she first created and every time I came back to New York it wa me that called her and me that went to see her and me that ended up compromisec always feeling a little bit ravaged, always a little less innocent.

I climbed up out of the subway and took a bus and then walked to her large imposing house. Inside it was dark; the curtains were always drawn. She opene the door with that same chuckle blandly emanating from her throat without disturb ing the careful composition of her face. Her thin brown slacks expensively showe the empty flatness of her stomach (Gigi's bellied out into a small mound of soft ness, having too much life in her to waste her time in the business of perfection and made her long legs longer. Her blouse was white as porcelain; the sleeve billowed down her arms. Her hair, combed long down her back, pointed to the heel of her bare feet. The perfume which wasn't on her but around her was a reminde of past lust and past regret, turning to a taste like sulfur while at the same tim searching out the young lecher that crouches deep within me. Her bedroom hadn' changed either, nor had the scene which we acted in the over-familiar gesture of the play that's run too long.

"Don."

"Barbara."

"You haven't called; you haven't written."

"I haven't had time."

"Tell me what you've been doing. Have a cup of coffee."

"Nothing really. Nothing."

"How do I look? Have I changed?"

"You never change, Barbara."

And on and on until we'd talked enough so she could say, "Don we can't d it this time. We can't do it anymore. It's wrong. You know it's wrong."

"Oh love," I remembered the whore saying, "Oh you love."

And Gigi laughing in the movie theatre with all those different nationalities of people laughing with her.

"But I love you Barbara. I've always loved you."

Compulsively triumphant, she leaped up onto the sofa beside me: "And you always will. You can't help it."

"I can't help it."

Nobody else but Gigi could have laughed in that miserably hot bus where the people hunched, sweating, in their seats and glared out at the clouds, where the odor of us all rubbing together in that prickly stickiness didn't even escape through

e open windows but hung there on the heat. But Gigi was smiling and punching me the ribs because there was a noon outside that bus and people running around in it d she was taking me to lunch since I didn't have any more money. I had spent arbara's money on cigarettes and alcohol. Gigi was always moving or about to ove. She had to jump or poke or laugh or talk with wild gestures. Her eyes were ways turning to what people were doing around her. Suddenly she would try to be rious but a smile kept bursting out around the corners of her mouth. She began chew at the inside of her cheek with deep concentration, chewing her face like the d, lined woman in front of us was chewing the gum in her bloated mouth, so serious: s if that was all there was to life—her hard jaws up and down and the shopping bag her lap. Gigi kept time with her with that pixie-life of a look on her face and her es kept jumping from me to the old woman to see that I was watching. And I was ughing but ashamed to be laughing at such a sad old foolish woman.

Then Gigi hid down behind the back of the seat and mimicked the old men's nversation behind us. Laughing, both of us laughing, but not unkindly—with love id life. Then she wanted to tickle me but I held her wrists together until she bit ie. We sweated happily and rolled with the surges of the bus.

After lunch, on jouncing bellyfulls, we walked back, peering into windows long the way, to the building where she worked, her smooth French-Canadian houlders sliding up and down beneath my chin so that I began to feel the first rumb-ngs of lust for this girl whose hand I clutched so tightly: as if she might run ac-identally of her general delight into the crowd and be lost to me forever. It wasn't n impure lust but a happy insatiable desire for all of this woman.

Suddenly she did leap out in front of me, looking into the shop windows, and rned her head quickly to catch me following the flowing lines of her legs which oftly glided up into gentle blue shorts. She knew she'd catch me and she looked at pixie, teasing look over her laughter of being glad I'm looking and not ashamed o let me know she knew I'd look and wanted me to look. There in the street with eople brushing past, their faces scrunched in concentration, I was caught rumbling nd lusting a little as she leaped ahead and I laughed to be exposed as she had plan-ed and, though ashamed in a way to be caught looking, I was glad to be looking nd glad to be laughing too.

When we got to her office she took her skirt out of that huge pocketbook she arried and wrapped it around her waist over the shorts, not giving a damn for the uriosity of the people walking by on the street, and went in to work smiling, waving.

I had told Gigi about the time I was with the whore but I never told her about Barbara. Sometimes when I had money that Barbara had given me I told Gigi the whore lent it to me. We even went to the bar where the whore worked sometimes ut Gigi didn't like the whore because she kidded about things of life that shouldn't e laid out over the wet counter of a bar. To Gigi, there are certain feelings and re-alities too delicate to be dragged around gutters hardened by the dirt that has passed hrough them.

The last time we went to the whore's bar together was that Sunday afternoon when the wind was roaring between the building—bouncing through the hall-like walls and sky—making hollow noises and hefting the dirt on its palms that whispered around the edges of our ears while newspaper pages swooped like willowy dancers and coiled and stood on end. We clung to each other, bending our faces over the dry sidewalk, and pushed against the wind, feeling an end somewhere that was hurrying

toward us, our words futile against it. We made promises but they were pulled b the wind and splashed away behind us with the dirt into the filthy river. We nuzzle together against New York's futures, her nose warm against my neck, and remem bered the night before in the tomb of my vaulted room, the tiny vault with flowere walls where our love was brought into the circle of light from a dangling bulb an yet it was here that we also mercifully knew that it would be taken without ceremon from us sometime. We sat cross-legged on the bed, naked as Adam and Eve, hold ing hands and she was ringed by flower-covered wallpaper that had become yellow

"My first love was sanctioned by the state in front of a clerk." I had sai (having once, by some platonic fluke gotten myself married for four days until b happy accident we were caught and annulled). "But this time it will be under what ever God, this city and our desperation can muster.

"Christ of the children," I said. "The love of the children and kind things and Father of the love of all things, of the understanding of our love and sadnes make this real before You in Your sight. Let us find of ourselves honesty and good ness and the happiness of children, happiness You have given to this world. An let it be with us with Your consent."

"Father forgive us that this isn't right before the church," she prayed "Let it be right with You. He's a good man, Father, but he does dumb things some times because he's scared. Forgive him, Father. Blow us a breath of happines and let us love a little. Let our bodies bear Your love and our hearts Your kindness Father forgive us and love us. Amen."

And for a time that night, the dust of the city didn't clot us but we rested b the clear stream and under the sun of early emotional love. The next morning w went to church; it was the first time in several years for both of us. We went to a Episcopal church, rather than to her Catholic or my Lutheran, where we sat an stood and kneeled and sat and intoned with the congregation whose faces scowled ou of their wrinkled, powdered age and the organ made a sound like the wind.

But now we were huddling through that afternoon Sunday as the wind beat around us and we could almost see that raging park through the dirt. We went int the whore's place and she yelled at me over the faces of the bums who hunched against the safety of the bar.

"Hi there, Bulltail. Where'd you pick up that big-eyed broad?"

We sat in a booth that had "Joy to the World" carved in the woodwork by some patient, Eve of Christmas bum and waited for the pro to bring us our drinks.

The pro was trading smacking loud kisses between drinks and sexless tweaks and pats with a couple of men at the bar while one frowzy woman was saying to another, "I got a bruise on my ass looks just like a wrinkled prune."

"That's nothing," the other one said between her broken teeth. "See this one. I've combed my hair over it. John here gave it to me last night for calling him a wino. Beat hell out of me, he did. You should have seen him."

They displayed their scars like banners, comparing them, admiring them. These were the people who came into the Sunday afternoon bars in that part of the city—the craggy custodians of the city who are its natural element and support, who go unnoticed by the cocktail crowd, the business-suits.

"Tell the amateur to shove her fat ass out of here and we'll get together when I'm through and I'll teach you a few games I'll bet you've never tried," the pro said when she brought our drinks.

She winked a lewd eye at Gigi and then gave her her rump to observe and consider.

"It's just that she hates to lose a customer," I explained after the whore had gone off to smack the men along their stools.

"No. She can tell I don't like her. I don't like the way she talks or the way she acts. But she doesn't matter. The only thing that bothers me is that hot, dirty wind. Its dirt is everywhere. Its grain gets under my fingernails even."

She hated the wind of the city and she was afraid for me of the city, of what it would do to me. She wanted me to go away with her. She asked me to go to Canada where we could work together and play where we could breathe without dust climbing onto our tongues. In winter, she told me, we'd go to her mother's cabin and build a giant fire in the stone fireplace and sing songs in front of it and roll out in the snow. She would teach me the songs of her grandmother and the dances of her grandmother's people, and she'd make clothes for me herself. She wanted to go where there's a broad deep sky and not just pale patches between the buildings, where we could see the stars and not merely neon lights or blinking yellow bulbs.

I said, "I can't go to Canada, Gigi. What would I do there?"

"Oh go. Dont' worry about what you'll do. Just go. If we stay here the wind will blow us off the streets."

"Ha ha," I said.

A man who was stumbling back to the bathroom fell down beside our booth and lay there breathing, not trying to get up, just staring into the floor. He wore an ancient, decayed gray suit which covered a filthy undershirt that was torn across the chest. I pulled him to his feet where he swayed back and forth apologizing incoherently to us:

"Drunk. Plenty times before behind the bar. Couldn't even see. Just stood there serving them whatever the hand grabbed first. Never give no change. They have to go next door to get change so they can give me right amount so I don't have to make change. Plenty times. Drunkern this. Plenty times drunkern this behind the bar."

"Hey," the pro yelled. "He's got to take over for me back here in half an hour. Hey Johnny! You John! Go back and stick your head under the faucet. And put on that shirt I bought you last year.

"He leaves it hanging there every night. He ought to wash the damn thing sometimes. Christ it stinks. I can't let him take it out cause he'll tear the damn thing when he falls in a gutter somewhere," she finished to anyone who was listening.

"What a heck of a way that guy has to live," Gigi said. "He probably owes the shirts he can't buy to some loan company. They don't pay him enough to be secure and then she entices him into sitting here and spending all his money when he's not working so he doesn't even have enough money left to buy himself a shirt."

"He's glad enough to be here," I said.

"Sure, so he doesn't have to think."

"Or so he doesn't have to go back to his room and be alone. Still in all, she takes care of him in her way."

"She takes care of him all right."

"Plenty times drunkern this back there. Plenty times weaving."

"Go on Johnny. Get on back there and soak your head," the pro yelled.

She came around the bar and shoved him so hard he fell on his face agai I pulled him up. Blood was running out of his nose into his mouth. When he taste it, he started whining. The whore shoved him again to get him moving but he fe back on the floor.

"Oh piss on him then," she said. "You hear that, Johnny? Piss on you then.

"Leave him alone," Gigi said.

"Shut up, you Canuck bitch, or I'll knock you inside out and use you for banjo-brush."

But she didn't bother the guy anymore. She didn't care. I finally got him c his feet again, shuffling and mewling back toward the toilet.

"Plenty times," he kept saying. "Plenty times worsen this I couldn't se the rain raining but I never dropped a glass . . ."

"Finish your drink," I said to Gigi. "Let's get out of here."

"Let's go to Canada. Your hand is cold."

"Let's get out of this bar first. Then we'll decide about getting out of th city."

Suddenly the drunken bartender began to groan. He just stood in the middle c the floor and a dead sound, a huge torn groan like some twisted nightmare emanate from deep within his chest and he began to stagger back and forth, moaning loude and louder. Blood spurted with the beating of his heart out of his nose. Down a the other end of the bar a woman began to laugh. It sounded just like Barbara' laugh as it echoed through the darkness of the Sunday bar.

Gigi jumped up and yelled at the pro who stood serenely wiping a glass "What are you doing to him? Why don't you leave him alone?"

"Shut up, Canuck."

"You're ruining him. You're ruining him."

I took her away quietly and we didn't speak because the sound that man ha made was still with us. She was going away the next day for her boss and we didn' know when we would see each other again.

Three weeks later she was back from the upstate office where she had bee sent; but it was too late, the garden of my hope had been broken. I was leaving Ne York. The colored flowers had wrinkled on the walls three weeks in the past an all we had around us now was the drudge of the city—the cars, the dirt and the smel behind buses. Across from her office building, we sat on a broken bench in a par that was pale and hot. Gigi had a load of sandwiches in her pocketbook and w chewed them judiciously.

"Did you call last night?" she asked.

"Yes."

"I wasn't home yet."

"I know."

"I didn't get in 'til late. It was after two before I got home from the bu station. I was going to call you but I didn't."

"I was at the pro's bar anyway. The bartender was in there horsing aroun with the pro and telling all sorts of fantastic lies. How was Syracuse?"

"Fine. I straightened the books out for the manager but Mr. Harding had t come up to straighten out the manager. Did you get my letter?"

"Yes."

"Are we going to Canada?"

"No. Gigi . . ."

"Do you remember those nights I ran you around until five o'clock in the ıorning—laughing and poking each other in movies and bars and just walking beside ıe buildings looking for sidewalk trees to pull leaves off of, to break in our fingers nd smell the green that's crushed out of them. Then we'd eat breakfast in an early afeteria, and then you'd walk me to work where Mr. Harding would sit and talk to us ntil the other people started to come. He likes you. He'd give you a job."

"I'm going back to my old job in Baltimore."

"We never danced. We've done all those other things but we never went to place and just danced, danced quietly together tightly with my head on your houlder. I'd like to be in a dark warm place with you now, dancing. I could cry little, but softly so you wouldn't know it."

"I have to get out, Gigi. The heart of New York City is cold, in spite of he summer heat. I want to go back where I was born, where I'm used to life and can handle it. I want to go back and rest in the safety of home where everything s familiar.

"You are good, Gigi, and kind and happy but the ugliness of what has broken he barman and the whore hurts me. I am drawn to the city but it repels me too so am torn between the horror and the beauty. What else can I do but go home and ook for peacy?"

"Come with me to Canada."

"I can't."

"Let's dance here in the park," she said.

She pulled me off the bench with a gay smile, dragged me up feeling like he barman being helped out of the spittle on the floor. She spun me around laughng; then we danced quietly to the soft, rippling notes she hummed in my ear, crying ı little bit—and one tear might have formed a small pouch under my own eye, from he dirt and the smoke in the air. Young working people and middle-aged women shoppers with their frayed bags on either side of them and old, scarred men watched ıs curiously from the benches—the sun came hard through powdered leaves—but hey had seen dumber, crazier things on these streets and were only half-concerned ıecause it was something different to buff up their lives and tell their friends ıbout; watching these two young people dance slowly ("Saw two obscene young ıids today, dancing in the park. Christ, the people you see running loose these lays."), hardly moving in the sun, tight against each other as if this were some ast garden.

When her lunch hour was over, Gigi stood in the doorway of Harding, Hall and Hall looking down at me on the sidewalk. The shoulder of my shirt was sticking to my skin. I looked into the sad lines around her eyes and remembered, ıs she was remembering, that garden room that night: the withered flowers on the wallpaper had reflected our hopes.

I left her standing in the doorway to go say goodby to Barbara. I thought I should see Barbara one last time to tell her it was over but I ended by lying ıonce more between her hard starched sheets which was my final act of self-degradation in the city that time. My lust, as usual, and Barbara's body overrode me.

It's been six months now since that park-reflecting doorway and Gigi is six months pregnant. Harding is still very good to her in spite of it. Her letters

tell me she wants me to come back to New York or to send for her. If I can sum mon the courage to face that city, I'm going back. It's cold there now and all th parks are under snow. Maybe we'll go to Canada after all.

NOTE FROM THE UNDERGROUND

The note begins: The Sea of Tranquillity lies
At the west end of the moon, and is dry.
It looks something like the face of a wise
Eisenhower in a flat pale sky.

Dust lies deep on the sea, the note adds.
And yet over its soft surface flounder herds
Of lunar elk, shod in their great sloppy pads.
Birds? There are only the bones of birds.

Nothing moves over the worn scars of battle
Except, under billows of moon dust,
Those shuffling platitudinous cattle.
The sole smell is a smell like ancient rust.

You or I, dropped into that powdery sea,
Could breathe but once. Yet we hurl ourselves away
From steamy teeming earth to dry infinity,
Not looking back, glad to leave man and his array

Of baleful manufactures of neon and concrete
That cover our rich loam, cover it with a crust,
Underneath a smog of methane heat:
Pleased that stenciled on our nose-cone, black and neat,
We have the randy slogan "Pike's Peak or Bust."

—*Carl Bode*

. Vogelsang

THREE POEMS

LOVE'S UN-NATURAL LAW

This is about a time under time and beyond words,
Frozen in my swinging heart impossibly as in the swinging sea
Fish are never frozen and yet we saw them stopped still
In the very lurch of that summer second,
As pictures of fish under the sea just beyond the camera's glass,
In a time under time and just beyond words.

Let me try though. Let us try, you said.
Nothing fabulous or ecstatic, we agreed. Just to capture
The white and yellow lumpy sky pressed to the blue flat sand,
And the sea moving in the thin space between
With its quick white fish and their flash shot still
By the camera of our eye. Our eye together.

For what else was capturing time under time
And beyond words than double sight made one
In the press of sand and sky on the sea's fish?
Only that it happened, and happening
Froze our swinging hearts impossibly as in the swinging sea
Fish are never frozen and yet were stopped still

MOVEMENTS

Lean, healthy girls
One sits
The flesh of her
Thigh brushes blue
Skirted her
And the muscles and
Bones
The tiny hair

Which must raise
At the cloth's touch to her leg
One stands
Walking out into the summer
Smashes shadows white beyond white
Between folds of her leg furled.

The dumb hummingbird
Hung shivering in passion
Does not see the dove.

Two swift-smiling girls
One tells a dream
An unending line of angels
Fanning the silver, breathless, deathless air in swirls

THE BALM

I

One unprepared for spring
Dislikes our distance from the sun.

Snow impossible, he may imagine the rain freezes in pools
When morning is still dark.

Though to wake then just to see
Is as much as wearing gloves, the rest naked.

It is like the effrontery of placing whiter paper
Upon the solemn cloth of a table.

Dry swift birds balanced on air
Shout for more rage, more blood and laughter.

The bird had a sure song, expected, but surprising,
Like amazing love in a girl's body. Just so

The robin hit the ground, hit, making terror.
The ground was soft against his iron beak, and opened.

What is needed is a human season
At will, really, and not in imagination.

II

She smiles, and smooths for me her serious mind.
The fury of her steady fingers fans my soul.

The heart is a wound
And provides a way of disliking spring:

Place the chilly flake of your mind
Beside the rawest part of your heart.

III

We must move away from that. The sun moves,
And faster, and we cannot be like it.

Once, when running, I pushed her
And she moved faster than possible.

Think of that what you will.
I do not mean hope of speeding and slowing the sun.

Spring has a time to fill, and summer.
The cloth under the paper is the same.

IV

What is it to think of the snow, now? he asked her,
Knowing before. You know, she said.

His mind was warm. What wasn't, in the heating air?
That night tips of the grass turned white.

Roy V. Eales

I. CHELSEA

It's what the week's been leading to. Without a doubt the misery of Monday to the joy of Friday is followed by the intoxication of Saturday afternoon at Stamford Bridge. All is lost, the factory noise, the sweat, the groans, the moans, the who is and who isn't to turn a screw, the foreman, the nagging wife, the loving wife, yes all is repressed 'til Monday — but then — life reappears.

But back to Stamford Bridge. The stadium is gradually losing its concrete to fifty-thousand hand-warming humans. By underground, bus, car and foot they've come — some past youth, others still with it. Those past will live it again. Those with it will hopefully see themselves a little better. Brass band music is being blown out of oversized daffodils. "Peanuts, choc-ices, chestnuts" are on the menu. The crowd shoves its way to the entrance, so does the excitement. "Program official. Program official."

"Give us two mate, ta."

"Program, official."

"Ta, thanks very much. Program, official."

"Greaves not playing, my God George. Here you see this, look Greaves not playing."

"What's up with him then Fred?"

"Sprained his ankle didn't he?" says a passing window-cleaner with a blue and white striped scarf around his neck.

"Go on. Did he? Here Fred that bloke reckons Greaves sprained his ankle."

"Did it yesterday in training mate," adds a passing sheet-metal man.

"Who they going to put in instead then Harry?"

"S'pose it'll be that useless bugger Smith, Fred."

Harry, Fred and George at last reach the entrance and join the long queue. There's never been so much reading done in Britain; all the heads are bent in the direction of the Chelsea Football Club program. Without looking up, the owners of those heads shuffle their feet as a space appears between them and the scholar in front. The fact that Greaves is not playing is old news to this front. But sounds of "Here, Greaves ain't playing today," still are heard towards the rear.

Now it's time for Harry, Fred and George to get in. Three chinks as three pieces of silver hit the iron-top cashier's desk, followed by three clicks of the turnstile, and they're in. Off they go to the middle section of the stadium. They go there because they've always gone there before. Besides, "it's good for a

FOUR SKETCHES

ıugh," says George. And that's what they have come here for. To take the week y the neck and squeeze it and the foreman along with it, is the intention. The pub erves the same purpose, but that comes tonight. Great, marvellous, fabulous, 's Saturday, the boys are at the Bridge, and all's right in the world — tonight ıe world will lose me; in a bottle of brown, Watney's Brown Ale.

"Allo Bert my boy, see Greaves ain't playing eh? Never mind matey, we'll till beat that rubbish mob from the East End, 'ooray," George waves his blue and 'hite striped rattle.

An old man with grey hair and red and crimson lines in his face, which suggest pints of bitter, taps George on the back.

"Ah yewl see oos a rewbish mob my lad," he says nodding his head and ɔoking towards the field, "ye noo Chelsee's a wurn man team, aye, they'll not do veel w'out yoong Greaves, nay, there'll no d't."

George digs Harry. "'Ere Harry that mob in the East End's started recruiting old Scots for support." Turning to the old man, George looks him up then down— "'Ere northern friend, aren't you tired from the long journey then? What, you get bus down from the 'ighlands did yer? Old man like you should be wrapped up in ıed warm-like, still you Scots are used to the cold ain't yer."

"Ask him about kilts George," says Harry, the old man ignoring them both.

"Yeah, er, tell us about the kilts then Scotty, is it true or not?"

The surrounding crowd meanwhile, take in the comedy. They know it's all n the game. At Stamford Bridge it's possible to grind a man in the ground with ;pontaneous needling; but outside of Saturday at Stamford Bridge he'd kill the needer for half as much; for then he's in the real world. But the factories are closed ınd George is free.

"What about the kilt then Scotty my boy? You're going to be making that ong trip back to the 'ighlands crying when Chelsea get out there today and murder hat mob from the East End.

"Get aat of it," is the shout from another in the crowd. "You're off your ɔonce mate."

"Off me bonce, off me bonce, you've come here to see the cream of London ;occer wipe their boots on the East End slummers mate, that's what you've come ıere for — and you reckon I'm off me bonce. 'Ere George we've got a right nut ɔehind us somewhere."

"My old woman and her woman's club could beat Chelsea," the hidden man replies.

"S'pose she's playing centre forward for the East End mob then is she George shouts back. Laughs from the crowd.

"What's she doing today mate, playing the schemer role?" George ad turning the knife. There is no reply from his opponent. A plane flies over t stadium with a red-lettered tail: "Drinka Pinta Milka Day." The stadium completely filled. The windows of a block of flats which towers over Stamford Bric are open and one can see the peering occupants assembled for a free view of t game. The man with "Program Official" written on his hat in blue and wh letters, is getting frustrated; his shouts quicken, commission is running o On to the field sprint figures wearing raincoats criss-crossed with straps ov front and back; bulging with pockets full of film and flashbulbs; and out of which o hand swings a camera, while the other pulls the raincoat together before the wi pulls it out again.

"What's the time Harry?"

"Two minutes to go George."

Just then a voice comes over the loudspeaker. "Good afternoon ladies a gentlemen. First, the team changes. For Chelsea, after passing a fitness te this morning, Jimmy Greaves will play at inside right . . ." A howling roar go up from the crowd. George turns to the old man: "There you are Scotty me bo you might as well pack up and go, we were giving you a bit of a chance witho Greaves but now he's in yo're wasting time here. Get the quick bus back to Hagg land mate."

"Ah, it'll do ye new good t'be coonting yer chickens man. Weel see lad we see."

"Rubbish mate, lot of rubbish. Here they come 'ooray, come on the blues George turns his rattle, waves his scarf. The crowd is seen to inflate and defla as if it were one living mass. The game begins. For an instant, rigor mort sets in as the crowd quietens, bewildered.

II. THE OLD MAN

"Well you see you get on the bus at that stop outside the undertakers and ne door to the garage. A twenty-eight'l do you fine. Goes all the way. Can't miss th stop. Er over ther you see where that red car is now."

The grey-haired speaker fixed his arms to his hips and watched the inquire cross the road. "That's it," he mumbled to himself. "That's the place mate.

He took arms from his body and pulled the burnt down cigarette from h mouth. "Augh let's have a fag then, shall we?" he said to himself warmly gropir in his greasy raincoat pocket for the green packet of Woodbines which were stuffe between the morning's Daily Mirror.

The crumpled box was found and the man puffed on his new cigarette beir careful not to throw the match on the road. He walked over to his boxy municip cart and took a broom from the top. "Right then Freddy my boy, you got to g to work otherwise when old clipped trousers gets here he'll be screaming blooc blue murder." He coughed and pushed the broom along the gutter away from hi cart. "Don't want to get the sack then do we? No, don't want that."

His thin face fell forward. Its watery blue eyes, almost covered by bushy ebrows, followed the long oak broom handle to the gutter. Two black rings circled s raincoat sleeves as his outstretched arms eased the broom along like the soldier ith sullen flag leading a death march.

"Been together now for forty years and it don't seem a day too long . . ." bus swerved round the corner, its brakes screeching as it neared the bus stop. Got bloody mice in his engine 'e 'as Freddy." "Watcha sweepy," the conductor outed from his monkey pole. "'Ere you got bloody mice in your engine clippy,' e old man returned, raising the broom and a wide grin from the conductor.

He struck a match to another cigarette and returned to his slow march. Two ggy girls clicked along the pavement getting a nod of approval from the old man.

"That won't do you no good sweepy, get you in trouble that's all," yelled e conductor as the bus pulled away.

"Get aat of it."

A fat lady waddled past pulling a schoolboy son to school. The boy's feet oved three steps to her one. He turned his head towards the old man and had his ar clipped for lagging. A red-faced man on a ladder splashed leathers on the un- ertaker's window. A sun ray streamed across the glass giving his work a polish. Nearby a bell donged nine from St. Mark's church tower.

The old man, like the bell, watched the world wake up. From the first light f the misty sun-rayed morning he saw the milkman, the postman, and the newspaper oys. As the morning became warmer and brighter he saw the scurrying legs arrying dozy bodies off to their jobs. But he was an onlooker and did not consider imself part of the action. He watched it all go by and commented on it from time o time.

"Nine already Freddy. Have a cup of tea soon." He shoveled a heap of itter then ambled to his cart.

"What's the time mate?" the window cleaner shouted.

"Eh?"

"What time is it please?"

"Nine, the church just rung; nine, mate," the old man returned, standing y his cart holding his broom at attention with his right hand, cupping his ear with is left.

"Thanks sweepy."

"Ere bit of a dead loss that place in it?" The old man added with a chuckle. "Mind you don't get boxed by mistake."

The window cleaner grinned. The sweeper returned to work.

"Been together now for forty years and it . . ." He stopped suddenly and gazed at something in the gutter. "Here Freddy, here, look at this," he mumbled, his mouth open. 'Ere, a fiver, cor, first time I've found anything more than ten bob in twenty-five years. Cor, a fiver." He picked it up, held it like one holds a prayer book, his mouth still open, his broom lying in the gutter.

"Watcha found sweepy?" shouted the window cleaner seeing the old man looking at the note.

"Fiver mate, a fiver." He held up the evidence. The other stepped down from the ladder, wiped his nose with his sleeve, then walked over to the old man.

"Bit of luck there eh? Stick it in your bin. Some rich toffey nose probably blew his nose on it and threw it away," the window cleaner joked.

"I dunnon 'bout that. We're s'posed to 'and in anyfin' valable. Case it claimed," answered the old man seriously.

But visions of luxuries which could be had with this five pound note — Asc and the races maybe; pints at the Rose and Crown; the best seat at Saturday's foot ball match — quickly overshadowed his conscientious thinking. His thoughts wei interrupted when looking up he saw the road inspector "old clippy" approachin The nickname was not given to the inspector by the old man out of friendship, bu rather was recognition of authority. Yes, authority, riding on a black bicycle symbolized by a black uniform with various brass buttons, a pair of turn-up neatly rolled around the ankles held in place by two shining black bicycle clips a stiff peaked hat with glistening municipal badge, the council's scrutineer of gutters enough to scare the strongest of subordinates.

The dark figure was nearing the old man who, on first seeing the inspector had, like most people when rank approaches, taken to his work with an unusual newl found vigour. He glanced uneasily toward the inspector but without moving hi head. What should he do? Had a toffey-nose lost the money? Not too many peopl have five pound notes, he thought. Maybe the person would come back for it The old man pushed the broom over and over the same ground, his mind thinkin only of the money and the rapidly approaching inspector. The steel tips on th inspector's black shoes officially rapped on the pavement. Could a road sweepe even attempt to outwit the man who stood in such fine-sounding shoes? Could his world of cigarette ends, litter, window cleaners, bus conductors, old ladies an brooms, defeat the Town Hall, the Council, and their inspectoral representative the high order? Black-draped officers were the closest he got to that far off worl and therefore produced a superhuman impression in his eyes; an impression for tified by black officers who would not themselves admit to being a little human. Afte all, they had a position to uphold and roads to keep clean. And judging from man nerisms displayed by those carrying the title of inspector the impression was to be upheld by them and the roads cleaned by the sweepers, and never the two shall meet.

The conflict was thus solely between him and the high order. A cut and dry matter of honesty — it was not.

The old man raised his head and acknowledged the inspector's arrival. "Morning Mr. Hardgreaves, sir, lovely one too ain't it?"

III. CATHARINE WHEEL POM POM POM

It was in the Catharine Wheel that the pomp and circumstance roared on a Christmas Eve. Who better to sing it than the publican himself. In the middle of a conversation of "are pubs of today, what the pubs of yesterday were," the voice bawls pomp and circumstance. But it's all right in the Wheel because it's Christmas Eve. So what happens? Well, all the backs are straightened and it's land of hope and glory pom pom pom . . . Lord who makes the might . . . . . ee make thee might . . . . . ee again pom pom pom . . . Lord who mayakes thee migh . . . . tee make thee mighightee again. The chances are nil if you're the bloke that happened to be sitting in front of the enormous pub owner when he did his

om pom pom. Break all ear drums and blow the froth off your pint. But it's hristmas and it's happening all over London. Froth's being knocked off as soon s the barman's arm has pulled the black pump; in Campden Town and from Wim- edon to the East End. But it's more likely knees-up in the East End with kids, ooking like Oliver Twist all over again, waiting outside the pub with a packet of risps and a bottle of lemonade.

Over here to the Catharine Wheel we've come though. All the pubs in ampstead, Kensington, and Chelsea have been crawled. Before the pomp and ircumstance, peace on earth. It's impossible to move up, down or along — the ub is so full. Above, if you're six foot, there is about five inches, then long oak eams with brass horseshoes and pewter mugs hooked along. In front, is a man lmost knocking the beer out of your hand when he breathes. Behind, is a woman .ogging her voice to death with the Welsh national anthem. The bar cannot be seen. moke and bodily warmth, brown ale and Christmas Eve, make red noses, which low almost as well as the red and amber light from the oil lamps on the walls. o you stand until it's your turn to buy a round, then shove through the hacking ackets to old pomp and circumstance. "Er good evening to you me lad, what'll t be eh?" He's told. "Right here you are then, let's see now, er one and fourpence nd two bob's three and four, and another two bob, that's five and four skipper. 'a very much." Never seen the sea, but you're made a captain just like that. Marvellous. "Here you are sir, ten bob you gave me, so that's four and eight change, ovely, and the next please, pom pom pom." It all means someone is going to get eer on his coat on your way back. But where would we all be without the Catharine Wheel? "In pocket," a voice says.

Pork pies are good with the beer says the man with the trilby. Pubs allowed o stay open later tonight, says another. Drinking and serving, everyone can work overtime. Land of hope and grimy, father of the flee, has just been heard across he room. Any minute now expect the queen to walk in and buy a pint. One thing hat can be said about the Victorian compromise — it brought the people together, just like the Catharine Wheel brings them together. But even so, one must watch one's step. All right, he has the right to a good start, he has the right to rise, ut even today, in Merrie old, once he's risen he is expected to maintain the ways and wills of his new place. His old father may have been a coal miner in the Welsh hills, but that doesn't mean he-the-doctor must say hello to the old father's image, a road sweeper, sitting there in the Catharine Wheel. Not even on Christmas Eve, you say. No, not even on Christmas Eve. Cobbett would have the Lords looking after the serfs, but it's doubted if he would like the doctors to do the same for the road sweepers. Who's to ever know now? You've got the right to vote mate, and that's your lot, stick to your broom, it'll do you more good. But even so, the people in the Catharine Wheel are necessarily close. To really get them naturally close, a great power above all of them must be produced. Someone like old Hitler maybe, or Churchill. The queen is especially good for this. But unable to find such figures the only resort is pomp and circumstance. Pomp and circumstance, yes, there it is, the symbol which all the voices in the pub will raise, until old pomp goes through the ceiling and down Father Themes, and out to France and the common market. Persian beer is full of glycerine and pips said Dylan, and wogs begin at Calais it's said. Thackeray reckoned he could write nothing more about Rome than he could about Islington. Arnold said Holland gave him the impression of mortal ennui.

Lawrence shouted to God for help from the ugly Germans. And the publican i getting ready to put perfidious Albion on the waves again with pomp and circum stance. True island spirit we are about to witness — regardless of the Nationa Health and the Commonwealth immigrants.

The woman from Wales has broken off from the anthem. She now has de cided on a common denominator. It might be the leek hanging, worn-out, from he coat that waters her eyes. No, it's probably the gin. "There'll always be an Englan as long as Wales is there . . . Red White and Blue, we can depend on you da, da da, da, — da, da, da, da, — da, da, da, da." Give her the O.B.E., says a cynica voice from Ireland. "No, land of hope and glory," cries the publican jumping ove the bar with a pom pom pom. "All right, here we go then, ready, all your glasse full?" The pub breaks into Pomp and Circumstance. The volume is as sound a the oak beams. A little Indian pokes his head through the entrance, and is heard t say, "Oh, my bloody goodness me," before he runs off down the road. After th publican has asked the Lord to make thee mighty again they all go off to fight th French.

IV. "AND DID THOSE FIELDS IN ANCIENT TIMES . . ." YOUTHFUL DIGRESSION

It wasn't always like this you know. There used to be cottages and farms an green fields and a flower here and there. At least, that's what Mrs. Lovell an the lady next door told me, and she should know having been brought up here; yes born and bred in fact just around the corner.

'Course I was just a scruffy kid at the time calling at her door to see if he son Dougie could come out for a kickabout sometimes. But I still remember wha she used to say. Things like the river, yes, all about there being a river running right across the place where her house and my block of flats are now. And because of that river, she said they had trouble building the pictures at the top of our street.

They started to build the pictures though, but then they remembered there was a river underneath and the ground would be too soft of damp or something like that. I think she called it the River Bourne. So instead of finishing the building work, they turned it into an egg factory where they packed eggs and sent them all over London. But Mrs. Lovell said the council got the surveyors in 'cause the picture people what owned the land still wanted to have a picture house there. Those council people said it was all right so they did and it's there now at the top of our road, called the Odeon.

All my mates were glad the Odeon was built but really we liked to play soccer in the streets better. What we'd have would be two goals: one near Mr. Heeks penny lolly shop; and the other near the Cottage Cafe where the Irishman made tea and cheese rolls for the painters and plumbers. It must have been the width of the road and about twenty yards long. Sometimes we'd get as many as six a side playing and you'd have to be a bit nippy in that space or the ball would go down the road holding up the game. We'd have to be a bit nippy if we hit old Heeks' window too 'cause he'd be out of his shop like a bullet shouting how he would get the police if he had any more of it. But most of the time we were sharp and be before he'd get out of his shop. Still, he wasn't too bad compared to old Mrs.

priggs next to him. If we hit her window she'd scream bloody blue murder and ell us her son that was on the council would get the police to have us all locked p. "Get to the park and play snotty kids." Yes, that was her. But trouble with iat was those inspectors in the park what looked like policemen wouldn't let us lay football there either. So most of the time we'd take our chances in the street.

But a big thing happened what changed everything as far as soccer was oncerned. You see one night, it was in the summer, five or six of us had just inished a good kickabout in the street and were sweating and our legs were dirty rom the road, when Dougie had a good idea.

"My dad always tells me off when I get in after playing in the street," he aid. "I reckon we should find a bloke who's willing to be our manager and start proper team." Well 'course we were all for it and after a while decided to go nd see Mr. Paddy Reilly who was an Irishman that had a Saturday job at the Ran- er's ground which was the big team then. What he did there wasn't really clear to s but the big thing was that he liked the game. Anyway we went and knocked at his oor.

We heard a big thumping noise come to the door and we knew he was in. It vas his boots what made the noise 'cause he was a bricklayer, and he was tall and ieavy as well. His boots were the kind that were strapped all the way up to his shins. They always had different colours, from the bricks I s'pose, of dust and paint. And his hair always had dry specks of paint and dust in it. He wasn't the shouting type of Irishman that always woke us up on a Saturday night when the pubs urned out with their songs and fights, but you could see he liked a pint by the red ind crimson lines in his face. Anyway he was in.

"Whall lards how ar ye then?"

Since I was picked to say the part I told him we'd been thinking that soccer n the streets is all right but we're not bad players and there's enough of us to form proper team, but what we haven't got though is a manager and knowing he's with he Rangers and everything we thought we'd ask him.

"It's noice of ye t come t may, and oid loike to be ye manager, but ware d'ye tink t munney'd come fram?"

'Course he'd said enough right there. After all money was no worry since we all did paper rounds and could chip in with subs every week.

"Right then, ting to do is t foind a clubroom then we can have a weekly meeting every week at t end of t week."

Mr. Reilly said he knew a man that worked for the local paper and he'd speak to him about getting a story on our new club to be called Courtnell Rovers after the name of his street. We were all pleased and Thursday, when the first meeting was held in his front room, the man from the paper came and took a photo of us all. The next week the paper came out and there on the sports page was the photo and above it it said:

A CLUB WITHOUT A HOME, ANY OFFERS?

A little while after, a school wrote to Mr. Reilly and said we could use their playground and classroom once a week. Well as you might imagine it was just what we wanted and we had a good season before the trouble came. One night at a meeting Mr. Reilly said the club would start another team. He wanted us younger kids to be a second team and a bunch of bigger kids more than eighteen to be the big team in the club. Well this was a big shock to us what had started the club and we

told him so. But more and more big kids came and we soon had to leave. We'
been a bit narkish at Mr. Reilly ever since, but it wouldn't be fair to say the cl
doesn't do well 'cause it does. Mr. Reilly always has his picture in the paper a
they have dances and things, but we always say though, that it was us what real
started the club. I s'pose it would have been better if the fields had still been he
then we wouldn't have bothered anyone.

LEONOV

Out of the womb of earth
Is born a new man
Who leaves the warm illumination
Of answered questions and solved formulae
To wander helplessly in the dark, fluid void.
Puzzle of the old sphere worked, he ponders now the new.

Yet premature--unsure,
He dares not go far,
Still, lets go his grip on what he knows,
And tumbles in an altitude above all thought,
Floats upon the currentless stream of atmosphere.
Not held within old order, he bravely spins in awe.

New man in new heaven,
Begotten of old earth,
Not yet releases the cord of life,
Not without fear, in a wonderment beyond knowledge,
Swims within the questioning depths of intellect.
Witness of his own conception, he marvels at his birth.

—Mary Dorothy Neary

Margaret Candace Spellacy

TWO POEMS

CARNIVAL

I heard the bumpy smooth carnival sounds
Of darkness mixed with cotton candy, scare.
You heard axles groan and creak,
And sideshow men chant greasy tricks.

You didn't see the giddy-making,
Sinking, lifting silver flight.
You saw nuts and bolts and painted steel—
Not star-fling magic glued
Onto the night.

While we dangled, swinging rocking
Nine hundred Ferris feet in the air,
("Not nine hundred, only fifty—
No higher than your backyard tree.")
You pointed out my house to me.

I didn't see it. Only vasty
Panoramas sled and jumbled
When I looked from the sky.

(WOMAN AGED BUT NOT WANTING IT YET)

Woman aged, but not wanting it yet;
Hiding it deep, but there
Like Spring promised under Winter.

Still girl-shining outside, but thin—
A proper wind would pull the paper off.
Not fighting the breeze, but walking tight.
Oh not running you know but not
Staying still and melting either
In the breath air.

Spying carved hearts in broken trees,
Skirting them now, but marking the path
For maybe tomorrow.

(WE BOTH KNOW NATURE DRESSED IN GREEN)

We both know nature dressed in green.
My eyes, as yours, see clean white running water stream
through pillowed beds of orange clay.
We both see children dart this way
and that in Springtime's sparkling play.

But once again the telescope
whines slowly up a silken slope
of metal in my memory.
The hum of the observatory
fills my ears. The eyepiece drops
before my face and stops.
I see the crimson planet Mars,
a-streak with lines in distant haze,
and know that there are many ways of vision.
There are sturdy bars between us
That shall never break. The trees,
the stream, the whining top
between the fingers of the boy
who sits intently on the ground
before us brings a sigh of joy
from me but not a sound from you.
I laugh and hug the earth to me.
You sob, your head on your knee.
And Mars, in a view a-stud with stars,
is as near me as what you see.

—*Michael Gura*

Jack Prial

OCTOBER 14

Juen ve? I don't know. How does one ever really know? The circuits of memory and time deceive those who ask to be deceived with the imagined no less than the real.

Let me go back 15 years. Dolores had come for the summer to live with Joyce across the street. Dolores was a pixie incarnate, one of those blithe spirits who had been granted life, 13 years old, dark hair which flowed to her waist and trailed her when she ran, a wide, secretive smile, dancing merry eyes which defied anything to hold their restless attention. I was 14 growing tall lank and awkward and completely captivated by the visiting cousin across the street who was practically handed to me by default when Joyce entered a bookish phase that summer, sitting on the front porch everyday reading Jane Austin and the Brontes and whatever else a 15-year-old with poetess pretensions reads.

Anyway Dolores belonged to me that summer as much as a pixie can belong to anyone. We played softball at the playground. The guys were first griping then teasing about it until the morning Dolores slid into Nicky Romanek at home plate with a ruthless abandon that sent Nicky limping home. We ate butterscotch sundaes at Billy's which did nothing for my acne. We took bicycle rides in the surrounding farmland around the town. Best of all, we explored Dalton's Woods, all 12 acres, and swam in the creek which meandered through it. Then we were alone and I marveled at and worshiped her freshness and imagination and delight with life. She would invent games to keep us occupied for hours until the sun and our hunger told us it was time for dinner. We would lay on the creek bank chewing weeds, not talking, watching water bugs maneuver for position in torpid water until we became one with the muddy bank and the water and the patch of sunlight swathing through the trees across the creek. Other times we laughed and yelled and mimicked so long and loud that every living thing in that woods must have been in a state of consternation. And sometimes we kissed quickly and softly as the breeze which ran through the woods in the afternoon and Dolores would wrinkle up her face into mock seriousness and shake her finger saying "be good you." One day I thought I had trapped the pixie. We lay on the bank after a swim in our bathing suits and I rolled over on her and kissed her hard and our tongues were searching and she opened her eyes and stared at the sky and announced "I have been ravaged by Rudolph Valentino" and stuck her tongue out at me and giggled. I reddened and started to be angry but she got me giggling too.

FROM THE NOTEBOOKS

OCTOBER 14

The bus station was empty, I'm glad no one saw or heard it happen when I put 50 cents into the machine expecting clam chowder and a dab of hair tonic, the sudden blast of air and the terrible resonate voice which came out commanding me to "LEARN THE RULES" and kept echoing back and forth through the corridors like an eternal ping pong match — "rules . . . rules . . ." I hurried out into the streets and soon was lost.

The sign on the storefront church read "The All-Sect, All-Encompassing Temple of Divine Love." Intrigued and seeking the rules, I went in and sat on the floor amid the small half circle of worshipers in the semi-darkness. A tall red-faced young man with stooped shoulders stood in front, swaying building up to a frenzy, imploring us to "renounce yourselves and everything you have ever been, done or loved in the name of Jesus Christ. Give up everything, for it is sinful, and accept, accept brothers, the love that J.C. showed for all men on the cross at Calvary."

I stood up and said "Everything is not bad or sinful" and the preacher glared hatred at me and shouted "You have to accept, to believe in J.C.'s love or you will be helplessly damned to the hellfire of his hatred." I told him "You bug me," and went back into the street, grateful for the cold.

I heard a harmonica, beautiful in the stillness, playing "Peace in the Valley," and went over to the negro sitting on a doorstoop and said "you have your God right there, don't you." "No boy, there is no god, that's just for the temple trade." With that, he pulled off his blue glasses and his two eyes, where they should have been, were two stitched-up crescents of bright yellow thread smiling at me. "Tell you another secret, boy, there ain't no sun either, cause I can't see it."

The next person I came to was a hunch-backed dwarf sitting on a parkbench, crying. I tried to console him, but he didn't need it. "Man," he said, "I cry in joy for the beauty and splendor of all creation, the plan, the wonderful, symmetrical intelligent plan of it, I'm proud to be a part of it, however small, however insignificant. I'm setting it all down in my Ph.D. thesis to be published by Simon and Shuster. Touch my hump for luck."

"Whose luck, mine or yours?"

"You look like you're going to need some luck," he said ominously.

I put my hand on the hump and quickly withdrew it so I wouldn't catch it, but he told me to feel inside his shirt, I did and my hand was covered with a yellow, putrid substance, he giggled horribly.

I ran back to the bus station and washed the hand over and over again but it wouldn't come off so I put the hand in my pocket so no one would see it, yes, the voice was still echoing back and forth in the lobby of the station, "rules . . rules."

On a nearby street corner a young man impeccably attired leaned against a lamppost, a handsome man, a man who belonged. He mumbled something which sounded like "life is absurd," and fell into the gutter. He had just passed out so I took his newspaper from under his arm and laid it under his head, it was the New York Times and made a comfortable pillow.

OCTOBER 15

What madness awaits next in these maddening streets, I asked myself as the trail of blood led me compellingly for blocks. The bloodspots were matched exactingly to my strides, left, right, zag a little, into an alley, there he is, the young, tall, redfaced preacher bound in chains, his throat slit, spittle on his feverish lips, they move apart "I die as I lived, for a cause."

"Christ?"

"No, . . . ism, what does it matter, any cause will do, the exhilaration, the sublimation of all else, the sense of being right, of freeing man, I die to free man."

"Then why the chains?"

He shuddered and averted his eyes. "I begged my assassins for them I'm afraid of freedom."

He turned his head. I placed a garbage can lid on his chest. He would have like it.

I talked to many men in those streets that night. All had been beaten by life, all were losers, all still clung to some shred of philosophy that had served them ill, all thought they cradled within themselves some wisdom relevant to me none hesitated to share it. I observed, grew sick disgusted terrified blase, listening not hearing. None moved me. If there were any winners, they were of another night city, outside the possibility of my experience for I had seen heard done too much to ever break away from these streets. The machine voice which had commanded me to learn rules was a huge joke, there were no rules, no machine, no echoes, no collective experience common to all men, each man was alone on these streets, each terrible in his own lostness, aloneness, chaos, anarchy, vulnerability, doom, ignorance. The proliferation of machines, communications made this chaos all the worse, for men had ceased to understand and control them. Each man talked to, each loser, was oblivious to the common fate of all in that city, I saw all this only because I was free to walk from isolated man to isolated man, trapped with no belief of mine, to listen instead of preach, to take instead of give, but it's all ridiculous because if I hadn't been trapped I wouldn't have been there that night in the city, but so help me god (or whatever's out there taking a great lunch break running into eons while the creatures of the world it created play their games evolve their cycles, standing lost and alone, confused yet duping themselves into believing they're climbing toward some threshold, what is it, the end of the lunch break) I would have spent the rest of my life trying to find my way out of the night and the city of losers if I hadn't met him, the spectre of me, the only loser that had the power to move me, to make me quit walking and rest while my fate caught up with me.

He was sitting in a wheelchair in a dark recess between two buildings. He called out "Hey man got a drink?"

"No."

"That's the breaks. I'll settle for a cigarette."

"Here." I didn't want to get too close.

"You'll have to light it. My hands are paralyzed." He held them up. They ere twisted and atrophied. As I bent over to put the cigarette between his lips, I ropped it and jumped back. This was me, me, sixty pounds lighter and years older ut unmistakeably irrevocably me, the face a caricature of mine, thin and bony nd lined, suffering was there but no mercy, the face twisted up to laugh but there as no humor or warmth or mirth. This was a face alert but uncomprehending, iat would never learn anything, that didn't give a damn about anything this side f heaven or hell but its own pleasures, now obviously limited.

"Give me a drink, a cigarette," I mocked the face, the whole unmoving ody. "Hell, didn't I give you enough drinks, cigarettes, and whatever else you anted, "you dissipated wreck."

OCTOBER 16

"You scoff," the man in the wheelchair was saying, my head pounded, this as all so unreal, not me this was happening to, "a natural reaction of mask our fear, you realize, you don't believe, don't you know I'm you?"

"You could be some conceivable distortion of me, but I will never be you."

He laughed, a hideous choking for air laugh that rushed out and filled the hole street, night, city, till there was room for nothing else in my senses, white urning spinning bursting dancing spots blend to grotesque green shapes turn to iant predatory birds plucking at my intestines brain help let go goddamnit

He was talking to me, the clarity and gentleness in his voice and eyes seemed o belie his dissipation, his wretched condition, even his insousicance, maybe he id care. "Listen, there are no rules, there is no code of behavior you will ever omprehend to make life easy or even symmetrical for you. This comes to some ien, but you don't have the kind of intelligence or inclination or discipline to even eally want it. Go and enjoy, seize the day, the night isn't far for you, but learn little, master a little, become more sensitive and more aware of others, life is singular experience but there are others who make it without the rules, who might ven be considered good, but above all, be a man because it is going to take a man endure your fate without ever knowing why he must endure and still stay this side total rejection, which is madness. No you'll never leave this night or this city ut I'll tell you what it's about, this night, this city, these losers — the fate of ian is to endure, alone, ignorant of why, without appeal, without escape. I can't ell you any more, I'm tired, give me another cigarette."

OCTOBER 22

oure on lazy old kind of thing lay here and let the words flow forth like like ascading water too obvious spurting semen on the ground done before avalanche ietaphor breaks down must be form and depth to this artlessness and how does your arden grow lousy through broken glass and inner tubes into bright chic little cor- ages we sell the gawking tourists all tourists dont gawk some blend with the scene ke night thieves and walk inconspicuously until one fatal moment high noon in the illage square they shout here am I oh please dig me as I have dug you and all your ommerciality and the natives are so blase they hear nothing and poor old here am I

shatters his camera still nothing takes out his cock and pisses no river no w feet disintergrates and then the natives erect curie shop on the spot and sell ba ged air from the miracle of the disappearance curious smelling air like ether goi under the ultimate kick transcend the body out there into the haze look down lo down remember your origins you who dare to float up there who me I aint descend from no hairy assed ape my great-grandmother the seamstress has a genealo chart and we had existence back there through the unreal musty years we we thats nice because you arent anymore oh well my son is is he yeh sometimes I c out at night and scare away the phantom maggots devouring my body Stephen, I lo you but he cant hear me you see walking down the street kicking a tin can they jun out of an alley and converge on him swinging and if he were me hed curl up and tal his lumps and tearfully vow revenge eating into his gut the sheer futility but h not hes my seed plus one the X undefinable so he laboriously rises and beats the off stomping for good measure thats enough son dont be cruel son dispense justi but no more in your wake listen Stephen do you sneak at night and watch yo mother copulate with him do you I know shes your mother dont swing on my tr ceps are weak copulate thats a euphemism learn the words the words son master t words and youll master the people fame power you know leave your mark on peop and things and events and be wise enough to make your mark be good me no I did have long enough you have to do it for me vindicate me ward off the madness terr fying me some night Ill call help me give me and no one will help or give becaus didnt when I was out there dont you see the paradoxes that tangle my hair distort r vision wrestle with my soul Im proud yet without pride I hurt but cant feel pain I gregarious off the surface and withdrawn solitary within I pity myself yet dont real give a damn I dont I sought pleasure and felt relieved when guilt came I travell oceans and countries without seeing them I tried to destroy myself to end existen yet rise above the ashes did I how can I know Im beaten dead but I live on unburi is that the meaning of life to renounce everything for nothing to rise and fall ri and fall rise and fall the fear and despair of the fall the lilt and power of the ri over and over until the pattern becomes as lulling and deceptive and finally insignificant as the break of waves on the same spot of shore for generations ce turies millennium eons no one watches the whole the shore erodes sand and gra transform to rock but what does it mean who tabulates the attrition who car

OCTOBER 30

The longest night, hours of anguish, hellacious torment of lying on that narr frame with hundreds of demons racing through my legs imploring me to move, shi the restlessness grows worse maddening pushing me to scream out and here comes the jelly man, amorphous hideous he's all red jelly streaking down his fa changing shape, get away from me jelly man, he lies on top of me and I'm cover with red jelly and it's gone but the jelly clings to my body under the skin like myriad of jiggers each pinpointed in a constellation of itching torment, scratch m get your long nails under the skin, I can't do it, make the blood cleanse the jelly that's it don't stop the pain is so pleasurable

Why do I have to lay here unsleeping prey to every insult to man the nig can devise, the ivy climbs slowly down from the vase on the wall shelf I watch encroach on my feet but I can't feel it begin its tortuous route up my legs swift now girthing my hips waist diaphragm my breath is choked off I expand to gasp a

)thing happens the ivy pins my arms wreathes my head ax man here I need your ervices, all I can see are his oak legs and the glint of metal as it decapitates me,) not like that fool, but he is gone and the ivy withers like my limbs have and the evered head is comfortable without the unmoving body and it rolls over and over, f the frame, one bounce down the hall to the oasis, the nurses station, and I grin at e old night nurse, look, who said I can't move, but she is unshockable, calmly takes cellophane bag and puts me, the essence of me in it, good, I'll suffocate but she ins up the hall and restores me to it and there I am again, can't sleep, imprisoned

NOVEMBER 24

Hey slow whoa too eyeblinking quick the flame eats the wick thats your life the pyre in the grove of semi-sacred spruce higher leaps the fire than the tallest an can reach die as you lived consumed by anxious burning while naked canting itches of various ages heap more dry pine on your charred corpse till the blaze)scures a three quarter October moon brilliant one that you've become coinci-entally in time for fall rites ah man better the pagans gnaw the roasted flesh on)ur bones than the cannibals who devour their godman time and again and then have e bodaciousness to ask you to do same in the name of the father son holy ghost one eathe when all you want is to review your sagging soul in the black and white two mension anonmity of some city scene where old men die alone or worse in the idst of their families in sterile green hospital wards the relatives hover above and ound the oxygen tent mourning long necked and bent while the man yet lives mind)u divvying up his meager estate while across the way a fresh out baby squalls and is baby is hope not cynical now I have to believe this baby is hope or I'd shrink the spot to a pile of pagan ashes prey to the wind or a footstep multiply these otsteps many times I don't know how many not being a mathematician and listen them collectively and pick up the stacatto of spike heels the long stride cat step him on his way up the militant even sound step of him already there the lagging even limp of a pensioner and the tennis shoe hop of the kid avoiding sidewalk acks and that is the tempo of the often cited music of life put another nickle in if)u don't catch it first time the great neon framed juke box of the times record anged every month sound stays same cosmic nickle collector and record rotater e've never seen his face but it's rumored among Hungarian homemakers that the ckle collector once participated in the chess semi-finals somewhere the Hungarians en't a specific people in galaxy jy8x approximately three trillion light years ago fending one of the masters with his stalling tactics who then and there dispatched s sorry ass to the cosmic boondocks ever to collect nickles from earthian juke xes back in our black white two dimension city where the cops machine gun the ofs clear of pigeons every morning following the second coffee break.

DECEMBER 1

splintered, fragmented the thoughts scatter in too many directions—elusive balls of mercury. of any merit is it to reach a gnarled hand into the mistiness the past to pluck a memory and then render its sweetness sour tasting in the acid esent? Lucifer once it was yours—all the beauty and light—and you gambled in a wer play and lost and fell end over end endlessly. Yours is not the face of evil t of flawed man; you are the patron saint of losers and megalomaniacs.

DECEMBER 8

Every so often, through some kind of chemical imbalance, a rare force o energy seems to permeate the usual lassitude that holds me. Maybe it's my cathete stopped up. Maybe it was no nose drops. For two weeks now, every morning, nin to eleven, I've lain above this typewriter, unable to touch it except with spille coffee, cigarette ashes and stratified ear wax. This morning I couldn't wait to b at it. The creativity in me seethes and bubbles like an untended perculator, kind o Youngblood Hawkish—Herman Woukish—Thomas Wolfish. Can't keep all that goo stuff in. It had to be the nose drops.

I admit one affectation; the rest are unintentional. I take nose drops ever four hours whether I need them or not which I usually do before the four hours ar up. This morning little nurse comes around with the 8 o'clock medications.

"Mr. Prial, we seem to have misplaced your nose drops. I can't find the anywhere," tentative, hopeful.

"Nobody loses my nose drops. Go back and get them" understated, churlish faintly menacing.

"Oh, we'll get more for you," rising optimism.

"Now," imperious.

"In a minute," compromising. sudden pause, breathless, verge of discovery eureka. "You're addicted to nose drops, you really are, aren't you?"

"Yeah," hard-won confession. pleading. "If you could only see X-ray of my sinus, you would understand. They, the sinuses, have been literally destroye for years. Childhood disease. I've always been able to lead a normal life as lon as I had nose drops. Just like a diabetic with insulin." abandon this tactic. sh might ask the doctor to have X-rays taken. "Look, I've given up a lot since th accident. Heroin, benzedrine, marijuana, television, sex, thoughts of women, ex cept you every once in a while, it's always about seven, the sun is setting on deserted beach in the Riviera, just you and I, you're walking in the surf, silhouette your hair glowing golden ... anyhow, after giving up all this, I'm entitled to remai addicted to nose drops."

"What am I wearing, on the beach?"

"I'll tell you after the nose drops."

It's been almost seven hours since I last had nose drops; I long for a clea fresh breath of air the languid sweetish smell of honeysuckle on a heavy summe night.

.M. FOUR POEMS

NAGASAKI

In the vile, rushing hiss, hired far away,
through, between the houses.
That made my children's eyes bubble and fall in the red dust
that burned my most loved children.

And when I took my children to the river
it boiled, and could not help them anyway,
so I cradled them in my arms
and made them a crackling bed
out of the few leaves.
But, two days later the flies came
and I could not keep them away.
The flies ate my children who
could not play or sail kites in the light, blue air.

Now, they say that it is over
and the Americans will come tomorrow,
but I cannot even hide my children
from them, anymore.

KLEIS

I will have a small daughter.
And she will wear flowers in her hair.
And walk in the most sunlit fields.
And be as the one wildflower in a host of wildflowers
And her name it will be Kleis.

LIBRARY SONG

The sun roars through the window
and strikes and explodes
the unwary it stabs,
it cracks in the face.
Like an armoured division it overwhelms
the sparrows.
Verily it changes the bricks, crushes buildings
lightly.
It does these things with an
audacity.
Attacks then retires
stealthily.
But before it leaves
before it sneaks out into the dusk
it lights ravishing fires in the
hair of the girl opposite.

IN A HUNDRED COLORS

They rest in striped graves
and are eaten by candy worms
the minstrels, the jongleurs,
the harlequins, and a family of saltimbanques.

Who flirted in the sawdust air
and camped on the beaches of the shades blue,
with tragic mustaches
they lived their lives whole
as a tented outing.

SOLOMON GRUNDY

While as a festering fetus
an Albino Negro acquired the psychosis of anadiplosis
That is, his gelatin form, womb-locked and umbilically corded,
repeatedly rocked from laryngal vibrations,
for sound travels fast within a fluid mass...
Those matriarchal ululations, vocal masturbations
simply, principally--procrustean precepts
blitzkrieged and bled
but resurrected and corrected
by the indefatigable bravado of brandy
(and whatever was handy)
Yet, at least, she never succumbed to suck the lozenge
of contentment....
Still, the eight-Chinese-month-old-man reaped
the dividends of distrust:
the fears of Malthusian mentality with its
literature full of anal passages and worse....
And she continued to rant and cant with
execrations and imprecations
But Pop elated and inflated
by the emphysema of hope
Saw the future bright
and then went off one night
expired and retired: he immured himself
in mint julips amid red tulips.
The son endured. But as an insider all he could do was kick back,
for perhaps his environs meant well?
Then it happened:
a gesticulatory ejaculation:
Out between her legs.
He their affirmation and they his pejoration....
Born backwards in the clamor, held dangling by a doctor doing his
hospitable toils, slapped suddenly on the posterior,
Solemn Man Grundy came into this life.
"His Race-shall-problem man" was his epitaph seven days later.
One day longer than the creation of the earth--
the earth with no dearth of death:
Still, the panorama abides and
the sea subsides.

—Robert G. White

Michael Mewshaw

Sandwiched between the publication of his two "major" novels, *Lie Down in Darkness* (1951) and *Set This House on Fire* (1956), William Styron produced a novelette, The Long March, which received little public notice, and even less critical appraisal. Perhaps it was due only to one of those quirks of literary fate. Maybe reviewers felt it a somewhat insignificant achievement compared to his novels. The fact that it was first printed in a small, obscure periodical, *Discovery*, which soon went out of business, did not help. I think though that after thirteen years, *The Long March* deserves serious attention, for like an epic, it captures the tenor of the times, the mid-twentieth century with its Cold War and confused values.

The deceptively slender plot concerns a battalion of marines training in the Carolinas for police action in Korea. As the story opens eight young recruits have been accidentally slaughtered by a defective mortar left over from World War II. Only for an instant are we at the scene of the carnage, but the absurd massacre forms a backdrop for the subsequent action. It contrasts brutally with Lieutenant Culver's rhapsodic memories of home. The morning after the accident, the bivouac ends and the men head back to the barracks, thirty-six miles away. The Battalion Commander, Colonel Templeton, decides that, instead of taking trucks, he and the men will march back in order, as he says, to instill in the troops a sense of *espirit*. To the regulars this is an arduous task, but not out of the question. The reserves, however, fat from six years of civilian life, are another question. For them the march is only a little short of suicide. Their leader, Captain Mannix, suggests that the Colonel postpone the march until his men have gotten back into military shape. The Colonel reminds him that, reserves or not, his men are still marines and as such must maintain the traditional lofty standards. Mannix thinks this absurd; yet he is struck by an overshelming sense of pride and obstinacy. He vows that he and his company will complete the march, regardless. Once under way, however, a nail in the heel of his boot works loose, pushing up through the sole until it punctures his foot with every step. Still he refuses to "crap out". Although he thinks the march and the system of values which produced it are ridiculous, he does not yield, not even when the Colonel, noticing the Captain's bloody foot, orders him to ride to the barracks in a radio truck. He struggles on to prove his point, which with time grows blurred into agonizing pain. His stumbling gait is transformed into a blind, mock-messianic passion:

> Mannix's perpetual tread on his toe alone gave to his gait a ponderous bobbing motion which resembled that of a man wretchedly spastic and

> paralyzed. It lent to his face too — whenever Culver became detached from his own misery long enough to glance at him — an aspect of deep, almost prayerfully passionate concentration — eyes thrown skyward and lips fluttering feverishly in pain — so that if one did not know he was in agony one might imagine that he was a communicant in rapture, offering up breaths of hot desire to the heavens.

Mannix finishes the march, but his victory is empty. The Colonel confines him to his quarters and begins court martial proceedings, accusing him of disobedience and gross insubordination. However, none of this affects Mannix. The accomplishment of a goal, the threat of court martial: both are immaterial to him, for Mannix is of that rare breed which always acts within the limits of its values, regardless of the rewards or the consequences. Although he is the story's focal point, Mannix does not change. The resolution or redemption comes in Lieutenant Culver, the Jamesian observer on whom nothing is lost. Culver concludes that, in spite of his respect and admiration for Mannix, one must be willing to accept the "system" that to fight it is like struggling in quicksand. He realizes that Mannix was right; the march was absurd, the system is absurd, the Cold War is absurd, but that in order to survive without what Sartre would term, *Nausee*, one must make a liveable choice.

The Long March has existential overtones without degenerating into didacticism. One aspect of the philosophy which is thoroughly and artfully developed, is the lonely solitude of the individual. Like Sartre and Camus and others connected in some way with their school of thought, Styron saw human isolation as the greatest problem of the twentieth century. While the machinery of communication steadily develops, men seem to grow farther and farther apart, until now they serve

> . . . a peonage to the telephone and the radar and the thunderjet — a horde of cunningly designed, and therefore often treacherous, machines.

Styron treats the problem in a consistent if not entirely unique manner. He falls back on Melville.

For example, early in the book there is a description of the separation scene of Lieutenant Culver and his wife.

> He felt her tears against his cheeks. It had been an evil day, and the rain that streamed against the windows, blurring a distant frieze of

> gaunt grey pines, had seemed to nag with both rememberance and foreboding — of tropic seas, storm swept distances and strange coasts.

In the same way, Styron speaks of a slick convertible which flashes pas the marines as they plod on by the side of the road, adding to their task

> . . . a new sensation of unreality to the night, the march: dozing, shrouded by the dark, its people seemed unaware of the shadowy walkers, had sped inceasingly one, like ocean voyagers oblivious of all those fishy struggles below them in the night, submarine and fathomless.

> Even though others are close by, loneliness of the individual persists.
>
> All time and space seemed for a moment to be enclosed within the tent, itself unmoored and unhelmed upon a dark and compassionless ocean.

The sea imagery of these passages had captured, I think, something of a Melville touch, and it is indeed remarkable that *The Long March,* short as it is, draws on so many trends and traditions in American literature. Stylistically, the prose is almost straight William Faulkner. Long, involuted, compound-complex sentences snake through the story and drag one along to the sad, sober, poetic world of Yoknapawtapha County. The setting is actually North Carolina, the time mid-twentieth century, but the brittle beauty of Faulkner's Eden is never out of reach, as for example the beginning description of the eight young marines who were killed by the mortar:

> It was not so much as if they had departed this life but as if, sprayed from a hose, they were only shreds of bone, gut, and dangling tissue to which it would have been impossible ever to impute the quality of life, far less the capacity to relinquish it.

But his dependence upon Faulkner does not stop with style. Often Styron has been known to borrow a story line itself, or, more frequently, its tone and spirit. For example, his first novel, *Lie Down in Darkness,* is virtually a retelling, with modification and modernization, of *The Sound and the Fury.* The characters, incidents, and even the four part structure, were all incorporated into Styron's work.

Parallels between *The Long March* and any one Faulkner novel are less obvious. However, many of the descriptive passages and several of the novelette's underlying ideas show a striking similarity to *The Bear.* Charles Wetzel, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, wrote several years ago an unpublished paper linking *The Long March* to *The Bear.* Although I was unable to get a copy of the paper, I carefully reread the book to try to discover on what Mr. Wertzel had built his case. I have decided that Captain Mannix represents the bear. Several selected passages, marked by a recurring choice of certain words, allow one no other conclusion.

> He (Mannix) was hairy and enormous and as he inched his way toward the shower room, clawing at the wall for support, his face with its

> clenched eyes and the taut, drawn down mouth was one of tortured, and gigantic suffering.

And in the middle of the march, which corresponds to the hunt in *The Bear*, we watch with Lieutenant Culver (who at this point might well be Ike McCaslin) as Mannix is brought to bay.

> He said nothing and Culver, watching him from below, could only think of the baffled fury of some great bear cornered, bloody and torn by a foe whose tactics were no braver than his own, but simply more cunning.

Several pages later when it is obvious that Mannix has lost all except for his pride and endurance, Culver thinks with commingled pity and admiration,

> Old great soft scarred bear of a man.

The parallels between Mannix and the bear run much deeper, however, than the superficial fact that both are hairy, enormous, and scarred. In essence, Mannix, like the bear, is battling with dignity and fury against a relentless, undefeatable, and basically oblivious force. He is a natural man, a twentieth century Adam, trying to maintain his personal integrity. There is still boyish charm to the war veteran, but this does not lessen his outrage. " . . . at the Marine Corps, at the system, at their helpless plight, at the state of the world." He is sick of war, the Cold War, the destruction of war, and the absurdity of war. Like the bear, who takes his stand in the wilderness against the onslaught of civilization, Mannix strikes out against "the system," against the machinery of war, the discipline, the conformity, the Boy Scout-like espirit. He is doomed to defeat, but he will not make the existential rationalization which Culver reaches, to obey or perish. He chooses to struggle on, to hold fast, in Faulkner's words, to endure.

An analogy between Mannix and the Bear gives *The Long March* more literary significance, but still it does not provide a necessarily perceptive analysis of Mannix's character. He is certainly not an idealized, carboard cut out. Within the limits of the novelette's scope, Mannix is fully developed. He can be interpreted in terms of both the Adamic myth and the stoic tradition of Hemingway's heroes. In either case, however, allowances will have to be made, for there is a blending of the two streams. In the first place, the Hemingway hero is an outgrowth of the Adamic myth, and Styron, although partaking of both, is also a step beyond, mostly due to the changes of the last war.

Mannix is an American Adam in the sense that he courageously seeks to defend his values against the amorphous "system." As is the case in much American literature, his rite of initiation is not into society, but away from it. He must, in consequence, stand outside his time, bolstered only by his principles. He is strong, but "buck naked" before the enemy.

On the other hand, Mannix doesn't completely fill the bill as Adam. He is Jewish, possessed of a wife and family, who give his life meaning beyond the immediate struggle. Then, too, somehow, somewhere, in the morass of the war years he has lost his innocence and ebullience. The ineluctable change, the process of time, has scarred not only his body, but something much deeper. Perhaps it was an injury to his feeling of personal worth.

And this leads to a consideration of Mannix as a Hemingway hero. To be sure he is an initiate. He has been around, seen what the world has to offer, and realizes that all is *nada*. But differences soon become obvious. Mannix is courageous, physically and constitutionally tough, but he is not a Jake Barnes or a Nick Adams. More often than not his stoicism breaks down into an endless spiel of complaints. He is outspoken in his criticism of Colonel Templeton, the Marine Corps, and the hellish state of the world. He is not above crying at the sight of slaughtered, young recruits, or admitting his own fear. He says bluntly, "None of this Hemingway crap for me, Jack." In the end, though, he fights the good fight. He refuses to knuckle under. In this way, he is more courageous than a Hemingway hero. He fully realizes danger, fear, and his own limitations, yet he plunges into the thick of the battle. He refuses to hide behind a "separate peace." Mannix despised the "system," the mindless obedience. He belittles his own courage, even deprecates the concept of courage, but he will not let down. Like the Hemingway hero who realizes all is nothing, yet goes on with the game, Mannix recognizes the absurdity of his situation, but will not yield. When he is caught point blank, he forgets the griping and always responds like an initiate.

Perhaps the last paragraph best captures the essence of *The Long March*. Again the style and concept are Faulknerian. The word choice, the description of Mannix's battered nudity is based on the Adamic myth. The dialogue is straight Hemingway, concise and understated, expressing fully, however, not only what Mannix wishes to say, but Styron's own message.

The scene is in the officer's quarters after the march. Mannix, blind with pain, stumbles down the hall toward the shower room, to be confronted by a negro charwoman, who, seeing his bruised and scarred body, asks compassionately,

> "Do it hurt?" she repeated. "Oh, I bet it does, deed it does."
>
> Mannix looked up at her across the short yards that separated them, silent, blinking. Culver would remember this! The two of them communicating across that charm one unspoken moment of sympathy and understanding before the woman, spectacled, bandannaed, said, again, "Deed it does," and before, almost precisely the same instant, the towel slipped away slowly from Mannix's waist and fell with a soft plop to the floor; Mannix then, standing there, weaving dizzily and clutching for support at the wall, a mass of scars and naked as the day he emerged from his mother's womb, save for the soap which he held feebly in one hand. He seemed to have neither the strength nor the ability to lean down and retrieve the towel and so merely stood there huge and naked in the slanting, dusty light and blinked and sent toward the woman, finally a sour, apologetic smile, his words uttered it seemed to Culver, not with self-pity, but only with the tone of a man who, having endured and lasted, was too weary to tell anything but what was true.
>
> "Deed it does."

SOUTHERN TREES BEAR A STRANGE FRUIT

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
Black Bodies sway in Southern Breezes
Pomegrante trees and Scorpions dance
As a Beamoth brings vision.

A little Black Boy runs to his Mother
And cries on the soft petals of Jasmine
O' my Child
Lest deception in the morn
Do not weep upon a bed of thorns

The Child cries for his father
As the Weeping Willow bends to the ground
"Lord!
My father has lost his way
And can not see thy lovely vision."

'Weep my Child
For Truely has he lost his way'

In a Southern Breeze
There heralds a trumpet
For a Child who sways with the trees.

—Harris Leonard

Carl Behm

We had finished the game. My arms stung and blood oozed very slowly out o the thin gashes. The game had been played with a fork with a barb on one of the prongs. I had started first, wonderingly, looked at Abel's eyes: the barb lightly or the skin below his elbow. I looked through the blueness at this man and ripped the fork down his arm. We did not separate our eyes. My first thrust had been awkward I had never played before, I had thought of things and had been afraid to pull hard then there was the sting on my arm. The fork in my hand now, I ripped fast and sure.

I looked at my arms. The first cuts were firm ribbons of blood and in the last the blood was only beginning to rise from the pale lines in scattered drops. The stinging was pleasant and calmed me.

The night was still. Abel and I sat on the veranda after dinner as we always did. The sun, invisible behind Mt. Sage, neared the horizon. A flat calm had descended on Road Harbour. No waves betray the coral heads and shoals, the water seems a purple glaze devoid of all mobility that stretches across Francis Drake Strait to the windward Virgins like slate in the haze.

I decided to tell a legend, a tale I would improvise; though it is well founded if one were to look in Tortola's history when the earliest ships came to explore. These captains sailed west to advance the old civilization, to reap the Carib's land and the gold fields (they thought), to progress. The world was becoming something these captains had country and religion and their chance of fame and salvation.

"The sea was as still as now, John," I began. A few townlights are bands arrowlike across the water from Road Town. The gloom of Mt. Sage rises to billows of ochre and rose clouds.

"A small sloop lay becalmed Off Pelican Cay. She was an open boat, small and lightly planked with a tall rig. She was a survey boat, one of several from the galleon Endeavour moored five miles to the east in Cane Garden Bay.

"The Endeavour's mate had himself taken the sloop to chart the north coast of Jost Van Dyke. As the sun touched the horizon, he cursed his situation. He should have returned to the ship yesterday, but the work had intrigued him. Now he was becalmed; and when the wind did return, he would have to make five miles to windward and approach the Bay in darkness. The lights of the Endeavour were visible tucked in the hills.

"The boat remained motionless. The surveyor, an old man, lay against the forward thwart. Quarrels, a seaman, impatiently whipped the mainsheet against the gunwhale. And the mate: a curved silhouette against the dim sky, the tiller between his knees: he scanned the water to windward for any ripple that would tel

e wind's return. The sultry night wore into the mate's mind: a queer night for the est Indies. The haze had thickened.

"In darkness the sloop slid north and east beating towards the Endeavour. he wind blew twelve knots due East.

"The mate felt the movement refresh him as the wind transforms a dead iip to life.

"The mate thought of home and his family. A man should not be separate om his loved ones so long. He had lifted his daughter with one hand and kissed her /o years ago.

"The wind blew twenty-five knots. The mate ordered the jib handed. Soon reef was tied in the mainsail.

"The captain paced the Endeavour's after-deck. He gazed into the Caribbean)ping to see the sloop's lamp. His journey of discovery was ending; he rolled his ngue on full lips. And waiting him, the whole society of London prepared to honor s return. But no, the mate—the delay—the captain mopped his pale forehead. It as hot in the cove. The tall hills blocked the breeze.

"Quarrels thought it time to wear ship. The sea was choppy and hit the sloop ıcomfortably, unexpectedly.

"'Let's go back fast, the sooner we get to the Endeavour it's the sooner we :t home. And there's a lot of things I'm looking to see back home, eh.'

"The mate felt Quarrels probably to be correct. They would not want to)proach too close to the island in the night. Yet there was something of delight in :e waves that came without warning.

"'Nothing to see there.'

"'Ah, Jenks, you're so old you've forgotten what life is all about.'

"'The ladies, and all your old friends. I want to get me some land, mate. h, Jenks, you've even forgotten the smell of the perfumes you're so old.'

"'Here or England, they're the same for me. Nothing special in England. othing there at all. Nothing.' The old surveyor watched the waves suddenly appear)ove his head.

"The wind was at once forty knots. The sloop had beat north of Tortola and as exposed to the full sweep of the trade winds.

"Even as the mate thought 'I should come about immediately' he eased the ainsheet and fell off the wind.

"Quarrels bellowed. 'Come about. We'll never get back to the Endeavour.'

" 'She won't head up in this sea. We'll take the breeze off the quarter. She's more stable on a reach.' He heard the surveyor laughing.

"The mate ordered the jib hoisted and the reef shaken out. The crew hung far to windward. Throbbing, the shrouds humming, the sloop surfed into the Atlantic. The tiller trembled and snapped like a divining rod and the mate could no longer feel his hand grasping the wood.

"Even Quarrels was shouting and singing with the others, bailing like hell to keep them afloat as some waves crested above them and poured into the bilge. A wave broke very fast and cracked into the hull; the sloop was thrown six feet to leeward. The lamp was lit for a moment. Waves like a herd of horses would appear high over them, until, as if tripped, they tumbled under the boat.

"The mate is roaring laughter and singing as loud as the surveyor. For his eyes could not penetrate the blackness; he no longer tried. There was no land except the Anegada shoals fifteen miles away—but the hell, they'd pass them to leeward. The mate could not see the waves coming nor see the gusts of wind far-off on the water; he did not try. The wind shifted, the waves tumbled down on the sloop. They came, came then gone: their moment was his, the instant of response one with their being.

"Then above the whine of the standing rigging, the moans and bumps of the wood, the air filled with noise. Shadows tempted the eye, and could not be seen. Something struck the hull. The din increased. Quarrels had the lamp. And in that moment wind and sea abated. And the men dumbly watched the spectacle enveloping them. In a whorl of strength, fish, a whole school, leapt clear of the water. Their tails snapped the surface. Their bodies struck the planks. Three swam in the bilge. Quarrels held one a long moment before throwing him overside.

"The wind began again and they pounded north."

Our cat wraps her tail around my leg—a hell of a tail.

Starkly offsetting Mt. Sage the sky shimmers, green, and breathes, the greenness muted and brilliant. And when a funny thought—the sky here is ice cream flavors—came, I was in the United States, the university; and I was afraid to think of that, but I do not force my thoughts.

I look out. I see the hills.

A moon is over my shoulder and an extension inseparable in its beams egrets fly against smoky Sage passing into shadows so and then there like a light on cats-paw even there as it is not and, "Ah " said I, "Yes...."

P.M. SUMMER

Big Yawns
draped over chairs like some
limp stringy vines.
Sprawled limbs
like
careless brush strokes.

Lazily the flies circumference.
Ice melting in empty glasses,
easy yellow sleep.

—Martha Marcelleno

L. T. Gran

"Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quaerebam
quid amarem, amans amare."

—*Confess. St. Augustine, Bk. III.*

Although it was against my father's better judgment, I always attended mas on Sunday, my mother saw to that. My father's judgment was a wall of sand left b a child on the beach, hardly proof against the breakers of my mother's will.

I remember sitting in the pew between my parents, rubbing my hands agains the oily wood and watching the sad purple robes whisper at the feet of the statue along the stone floor. Mother was "all dolled up" that day, flowery. Pinned t her suit were bright violets. She wore pink lipstick and her enormous diamonc big as a carbuncle, sparkled among the black beads as she prayed. Her pink lip were saying "Hail, Mary": I could tell. Father had no beads. The bow of m shoe was untied and the plastic tip of the lace knocked against the sole when I kicke it. It was very annoying because I had tied the shoe-lace myself and had taken grea pains with it.

I whispered to myself like my mother, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph " thoug I shouldn't because that is not a prayer but a curse.

At the front of the church before the marble railing were long green palr leaves because it was Palm Sunday. Mother stopped praying and the Priest bega talking quietly in Latin which is a foreign language. Mother opened her missil with the yellow ribbon. I glanced at my father and he smiled at me.

Later the priest talked loudly to us in English so we could understand. H started by talking about Apostle Peter.

Apostle Peter was a fisherman. I knew that. He caught fish in a net an sailed in a sailboat because when the wind blows it makes the boat go. I knew great deal about Saint Peter although Saint Francis was my favorite saint. Man things looked like boats when I thought about it: my shoe and my mother's hat an even the church. Jesus looked like the sail of the boat, the church, which woul have been a very heavy boat because stones sink.

It was Palm Sunday, when Jesus came to Jerusalem.

After the priest, who was a man who wore skirts, finished talking in Englis he walked up the white steps. Behind him walked two boys, like angels. One wa Raymond Falk.

THE PROBLEM CHILD

Raymond Falk's mother said: "He's no angel."

I looked at my mother. She said: "He's an angel with a tail, that's what he s."

The man in skirts slid back the curtains and opened the tiny door. He put ıe white things in the cup and kissed it. Mother stood up and tiptoed sideways to ıe aisle. She looked very sleepy. The man in skirts came down the steps. Raymond 'alk dropped the skirt and the man caught his foot in it. Everyone stood up like ledge allegiance or a home run. He fell down, bum.

I remember other things too. I think it was Mr. Barren who told me, "Women 'ill do most anything, commit a thousand casual atrocities, in the name of love." or instance, my mother, bless her heart, christened me Gregory Peck out of ıaternal solicitude. All of my life, that is, for twenty years, this name has plagued ıe like a hereditary disease. I have tried with all my ingenuity, and I am a rather ıgenious person, to disguise it and myself, short of wearing sun-glasses indoors. ut nothing seems to dispell the aura of Hollywood associated with my name. It is s though I were Italian and attempted to mask my garlic breath with wad after wad f minted gum. As though this were not a sufficient drawback, I have yet another unique" characteristic: my eyes are of different colors, one a soft fawn brown, ıe other a kind of iceberg blue. My eyes, you see, are about as well-matched as ıy parents. How they ever collaborated in my conception I'll never know. I ıess I was the child of a truce.

As I grew older, a fate I fought against with little success, I became un- ɔmfortably aware that I was a problem child. I had a name that was a problem,) wit, Gregory Peck Postumous, eyes that would never be solved, and parents who efused to equal four. Life was very difficult.

"You named the boy Gregory Peck," said my father. "I indulged you in ɔur sentimental whim because you were pregnant, just as I massaged your back ıd bought you frozen strawberries, against my better judgment as a father and ıysician."

"Its a fine name," said mother, "a beautiful name. Gregory Peck was a ery handsome actor. And anyway you always rubbed in the wrong placed and you ever permitted me cream with my strawberries. What are strawberries without ream?"

The sun turned the dust on the library window to powdered gold. I watched ıe gulls drift along above the bay, grey and white, like angelfish in water, like 'iendly, passionless lovers, drifting. Through the door I could hear my parents

bickering. My father's restrained voice was almost soothing. It carried far, neither warm nor cold, but calm, enduring, as though it issued from some deep source of resonant isolation. There is an instrument like it, the Greek kithera.

"That is rather beside the point," he said. "Your Hollywood dreams and religion are, no, have corrupted my son. He is as passive and starry-eyed as a young girl... and I will not accompany you to church with him any longer. He should be developing some sense of reality."

"Misanthropy, you mean," said mother. Her voice was high-pitched, plaintive. "You want him to hate people."

"Please do not whine," he said.

"You are a heartless man. You have no feelings," she said.

"If I had no feelings, Mrs. Postumous, I would not be concerned. You're smothering the boy."

"You just leave Gregory alone. He's going to be a ... priest."

"My son is not going to be a priest. He should look to his soul, not lick the wounds of a thousand whimpering females."

"Sister Anne said she felt the possibility of a vocation in our son—especially because of his love for Saint Francis."

"You win," he said. I could see him sagging in the leather armchair, like a corpse.

"We are going to be late," said mother, "if you don't wish to come, then don't. Read the paper. Read the funny paper. It might improve your disposition."

Mother tip-toed into the library. She wore a soft pink suit that restrained her fullness and warmth and a little pink hat that revealed much of her heavy braided hair. She always treated me as though I were in love, whispering, as she did now, so as not to startle me.

"It's time go, darling," she said.

"Well, Saint Francis," she said (he was my patron saint), "What do you think of this lovely morning?"

We drove along the coast road. The waves were small, like the furrows of a field streaked with spring snow, ragged ermine. The sun filled the whole horizon, as though the green bay flowed into a golden sea beyond.

"I can hear Saint Francis laughing, it is so beautiful," I said, although I knew he was weeping for my sinful hands, my shameful heart. For I was a sinner in thought and deed. I was Satan's child.

"That is poetry," mother said. "You must write that down in your diary."

"Yes, I will," I answered.

She had bought the heavy black diary, which was to become the holybook of my imagination, on my thirteenth birthday. In it I recorded with the fidelity and awe of a biblical scribe my every emotion, as though each were god-inspired, a silent parable.

Among the words which sanctified the disappointments and terrors of my youth was a brief poem I felt justified in appropriating. Though it was not my own it seemed written about me.

> A tiny moon as small and white as a single jasmine flower
> Leans all alone, above my window, on a night's wintry bower,
> Liquid as line-tree blossom, brilliant as water or rain
> She shines, the first white love of my youth, passionless and in vain.

The first white love of my youth! It was funny. Because I loved her she was "reticent as the moon, blushing behind a cloud." Reticent, I should have said, as a fan-dancer. How I loved Daphne—slender as a willow, with a breath like flowers—loved as though i neither hands nor lips. I hovered about her like an anxious silent bee about a blossom; I walked miles out of my way returning home from school in the afternoon, dragging my heavy awkward galoshes through the slush, in order to loved as though I had neither hands nor lips. I hovered about her like an anxious silent bee about a blossom; I walked miles out of my way returning home from school in the afternoon, dragging my heavy awkward galoshes through the slush, in order to gaze into the cold empty eyes of her Protestant home. I had become a solitary being, rejoicing in solitude, in a loneliness I offered up upon the altar of love. I became silent, inward, for fear of tearing the frail veil of my love with anything more real than wishes and sighs.

"What do you think of cutting up that frog in biology? Isn't it gruesome?" I tried to smile. What could I say to my jasmine flower? I wanted to cry. My eyes watered with gratitude, but my throat was clogged with fear.

"Yes," I rasped.

She smiled shyly while I pretended to tighten my tie. After filling my tray with two desserts and forgetting my milk, I fled to the tables where the boys gorged themselves, while flicking orange-peels back and forth behind the monitor's back. Boys are brutes!

I could not have spoken more than two words to my love between that day in autumn and the spring when she moved away from the forbidding grey house to another city.

That day after class I went to the pond behind my home. The pond was dark in the afternoon. The leaves fell quietly into the dark water from the glowing cedars, like hot ashes that hissed to sleep in the water. A few late October robins, forlorn birds with winter in their eyes, ate breadcrumbs I sprinkled on the ground. I seemed to see Daphne sitting there, very silent in her silent clothes, gazing at the water. I hoped she would not speak to me again, though her voice was as sweet and as pale as a nun's voice, but that she would merely gaze with ineffable wonder and sweetness at the water and the leaves like ashes. I continued to think of her as the guardian of my pond of dark water and of my afternoons and silent, leaf-filled evenings. There was worship in my thoughts of her. Her name was like a sacred wafer on my tongue, and my thoughts were as the bowing cedars, a shelter unto her.

Only one other time did I permit my eyes to violate those sacred rooms wherein her thoughts were acted with piety and constraint. Raymond Falk, the altar boy, was rubbing shoulders with his tribesmen and snickering and chuckling in his cupped hands.

He said, "Daphne is a swell piece! Daphne is a swell piece!"

Her eyes watched me flailing about on the floor. It was like trying to swim when the water swarms about you and pulls you down, trying to swim in the heavy water, pummeling the water with tired arms until the teacher came. Then Daphne swung her hips among the other girls, and they all laughed like chewing cows.

But I fell in love again, of course. However, second love is never the same as first. Second love was physically passionate, but at the same time disillusioning. After a few weeks of blind frenzy among the dunes, Jane and I fell into a kind of convenient friendship, which, I am happy to say, ripened into a genuine feeling of

respect and concern, like that of brother and sister. We were realistic and mature about one another. Although we were aware of one another's failings, "feet of clay," so to speak, yet we continued to care for one another like siblings. It was a satisfying and above all "realistic" connection, though I have had my doubts about it. And that is why I am writing this story, which is both an accusation and an apology.

My mother was the most beautiful woman of my acquaintance. Today, however, her beauty seemed but ugliness of a different order, woman's ugliness. Why, I asked myself, had I mistaken the unique faults of women for their beauty?

Her lipstick had cracked in the early morning heat.

"You are extraordinarily pensive today," she said. "Is anything troubling you?"

"No," I said, "that must be your imagination."

"I don't mean to pry," she said, "but really, you seem almost in a trance. And you keep your hands in your pockets as though you were ashamed of them."

My hands fluttered like frightened birds from my pockets.

"You have beautiful hands, fine musical hands. You needn't be ashamed of them," she said.

She patted my quivering fist with her palm.

Mother talked with the Murdocks before mass, about her music class and hefty Mildred, their daughter, who struggled up and down the piano scales as though they were stairs. Mrs. Murdock asked if I were coming to Mildred's beach party. She was a motherly, presumptuous woman, but she seemed to have difficulty finding her words, as though I disconcerted her. Usually, however, I had little trouble communicating with adults. Mildred's "splash" was the big affair of the summer before returning to school, and, though I hated to lie, I told her I would be there.

After mass we drove back beside the brilliant sea.

"You didn't take communion today," mother said. "I thought you went to confession last night."

"I did," I said, "or rather, I intended to. But there was such a terribly long line of sinners, you know, that I found it awfully depressing. And besides, I didn't care to wait."

"But its so worthwhile," she said, "afterward. You feel so free, so clean."

"I doubt that you've ever done anything really wrong," I said.

"I've not been particularly evil," she said, her lipstick smiling, "but we all sin in little ways."

Then she looked at me very seriously.

"Gregory, would you rather be an actor than a priest? Mother really wouldn't mind you know."

That night I slipped out of the house, ostensibly bound for Mildred's, my towel draped innocently over my shoulder. Instead, I forced a path through the sword-grass on the other side of the inlet, in the waning light like the luminous belly of an oyster shell. A seagull lingered above the inlet, suspended in the undulating air by the sighs of its wings.

The damp sand cooled my feet burning from the sharp grass. As I jogged along, I felt in my pocket for the bribe, and, reassured of its safety, drew it out to look at. I must have studied the necklace twenty times throughout the day, trying

to assure myself of its adequacy. It had taken me two days to collect and string the sea shells, the most delicate, pearl-tinted ones for Jane's neck.

"Maybe," I thought, "if she likes the gift, I will say, 'It will remind you of the necklace of kisses I gave you two days ago, and which must be restrung at each meeting.'"

I liked the sound of the words in my ears, and was sure they would impress her. Nor did I regret the premeditation, for my bribe was well received, gratefully, in fact.

Later, a clumsy crow stumbled into the sky above the inlet frightening away the silent gull. "Tortured bodies of driftwood, knotted green hair of the sea," says my diary.

Even in sleep the swan was dignified, that anyone could appreciate. Its long neck, curved and slender as that of an Italian princess, was a mark of royalty, and it occurred to me—I had almost mentioned it to my sister—that to sleep with poise and grace is perhaps the surest sign of royal blood, of a consecrated and poetic soul. Looking on from the shore as we did, one imagined the swan to be surrounded by the misty perfume of a lily, it was so much like one in its dazzling purity. No doubt its wings were as delicate as the tissuey petals of a flower. About the swan the water was blanched, as though the moon were an immense lily-pad: the swan seemed its flower, folded to sleep. Along the banks stood weeping willows, and through their foliage could be seen the gravestones which gave off a deathly pallor.

Downstream, below the falls, I could see the amusement park: the big dipper—a skeleton hung with colored lights—the ferris wheel spinning, the planes circling like blue birds. The colors made me dizzy. I heard laughter among the gravestones, and terrible screams, but they came from the park, as did the sound, like the spitting of rain in a fire, of metal blanks striking bronze targets at the shooting range.

The sly ones crept on hands and knees among the pale stones. Their rubber shoes squeaked in the damp grass. One, the leader, though smaller than the others, his keen eyes enlarged in the darkness, raised his hand: it gleamed like a wound in the eyes of the others. They crouched lower at the leader's signal. He mounted the pale monument beside him, wrapped his legs tightly about it, and scanned the willows, brushing back the shock of hair spouting from beneath his cap. Through the trees he spied the bird, resting like some rare white flower upon the blanched water. He slid down the monument, his trousers scraping against the granite, and, thrusting his hand into the tight pocket, grasped the hot stones....

"What are you doin'? You're always pullin' at me, Ralph. Like I was a piece of dough or somethin'. Can't you lay still... watch the swan, Ralph."

"Come on, honey."

"Lay still and watch the swan, then I'll do it if you want."

"Shit."

"Its so pure. Don't you wish I was pure like that, Ralph?"

"You're too damned perfect as it is."

"I wish I was...the grass is wet."

"Stop complaining."

"Wait Ralph, wait a minute. What are those kids up to?"

He raised his head above the grass. The sly ones knelt behind the grave stones nearest the water. The leader, his face swollen and disfigured, raised th piece of wood.

"They'll kill it, ralph. Stop 'em."

"Aw, leave 'em be. Boys are boys."

"But Ralph. . ."

The leader put the stone in the pouch and pulled back on the band. The ston sped over the water and glanced off the moon surrounding the swan, tearing the pa of light.

"You pick the strangest places to do things."

"Come on."

Four stones followed. The swan struggled up out of sleep like a white flowe in a crescendo of bloom. The sixth stone, the leader's second, struck its left wing, cracking it like the limb of a tree. The swan's almost human scream echoed throug the graveyard; its companions swarmed up out of the grass, beating the air wit bell-loud wings.

"What's that?"

"What's what, Ralph?"

"That "

"I don't know. How should I know?"

"It looks like a wart."

"Alright then, if you're so curious, that's what it is."

"I swear Alice, what a place to have a wart."

The Pullman car in which I sat, reading, rocked like a casket, as if, I thought, it were being borne on a pall of creaking leather straps. The gentle rocking motion had lulled my hypersensitive nerves, and the knots of anger and frustration which had scored my forehead were slowly disappearing under the patient unction of the hours, pressing like hands of tallow against my brow. My pulse had long since taken up the interval of the train's cradled swing. I was hungry, but rather than indulge my appetite, applied myself to the volume of Strindberg open before me. I was reading the *Ghost Sonata*, trying with little success to memorize the lines of the student. I continue memorizing parts even though Dr. Skinner does his best to discourage me.

"Gregory Peck," he says, "you act like Gregory Peck, that's your problem. This isn't Hollywood, son. This is theatre. However, you're a bright boy. You read with feeling and intelligence. Why not go for a PhD? I'll write you a letter."

I could not visualize the Student. All I could see was Strindberg's haunted cinder of a face in which burned his eyes, like suns. His beard was white as hoar-frost. It was full of locusts, like John the Baptist's, and his face was full of plague. But his eyes were on fire, like suns blazing in the Mediterranean, and in the middle of them wavered Hummel's daughter, like the stalk of a hyacinth. I have a picture of him. He frightens me to death.

The letter which had arrived but a scant three hours before and was now tucked into the coat pocket of my corduroy suit, scratched and crackled over my breast. "Would I care to have flowers sent in my name?" The question had slapped me in the face. A brother, I thought, is not to be slighted by mere friends of the

of the dead. In my haste I must have thrown both my appetite—the letter had arrived just before breakfast—and my sorrow into the old canvas bag, my companion through three years of college, along with the argyle socks and boxer-shorts and Strindberg. I had chosen the play as a kind of compromise, since I was not only in mourning, but in the middle of the semester, between the grief I felt I should feel and the rational behavior my condition in life demanded. I contented myself with the reflection that mine was the "wisest sorrow"—the phrase had found a comfortable drawer in my orderly mind—until, somewhat disgruntled, I recalled that I had expressed the sentiment of a murderer.

As I was packing to leave, Harry Lester had bulged through the doorway, like a fresh half-back coming into the huddle. I had no great love for Harry. He was a kind of penance I did, an instrument of self-chastisement shall we say. His rather thoughtless though affectionate concern annoyed me, though to be truthful, his dependency was flattering in a way. I did not like to hurt him, in fact, I was more often hurt by him, but I was capable of that cruel indifference by which he could easily be controlled. I had merely to let him slide by unresisted, to leave him, so to speak, the green hundred yards from goal-post to goal-post, to reduce him practically to tears; he existed only through antagonism. I am sometimes disturbed by my insight into people. Without an opponent—and an audience—he would cower weeping on a barren conquered field. His one positive asset, in my estimation, was his insentience. I could trust him with my most compromising and painful emotions, for he was sure to misunderstand them or to forget them completely. If I talked to him at all it was usually in the manner that, as a child, I had used in pouring out my heart to my puzzled, whimpering spaniel. I did not expect sympathy, but talked only to purge my soul.

"Taking a long week-end, Rock?" he said.

Rock Hudson was his favorite actor, so he called me "Rock." He didn't care for Gregory Peck.

"No Harry. There's been some trouble at home."

His ruddy, pigskin face went slack, as though he had suddenly been pulled out of the game.

"Anything serious?" he asked.

"My sister just died."

"Jesus! Here, let me help you pack."

"No thanks."

He was embarrassed, groping for something to say.

"Would you like to talk about it?" he asked.

The temptation to appear tragic, striken, was great, but I preferred to tell the truth to Harry.

"What shall I say? My memories of her are not all pleasant. We have held few things in common lately. I have always been rather quiet, as you know, thoughtful if not studious. However, some thought Jane too loud, too flagrant a person. Her gestures were extravagant, and not a few considered her thoughts petty. She was very much alive, very gay. Life was a continual party for which she was forever dressing. She was capricious, whimsical, the last person in the world to brood. Whereas I, for someone so young, supposedly knee-deep in lust, have achieved a fair measure of serenity—some of the fragrant and sacred peace of mind which is usually the blessing of old age. Jane's passions, you see, were sacred to her. She

cultivated them, pampered and indulged them, pampered and indulged them like spoiled children. There was nothing at all deep about her. The soul was one of her affectations, a piece of jewelery she never learned how to wear. She was always talking about it, not realizing that the soul, if anything, is secretive and shy and a little bit ashamed. You cannot proclaim it in the streets. Words almost always profane it. But she—and I had a brotherly concern for her in this—would wear it like a piece of gaudy jewelry.

"One of the things we shared, however, as, growing older we gradually grew further apart, was our attitude toward religion. Though here we were alike only in the observance, not in the spirit of our opinions. At about the age of sixteen I became peculiarly disgusted by "the things of this world," as I called them. Suddenly everywhere, the stench of a commonplace physical world repulsed me. I began tentatively at first, and then with nearly religious zeal, rejecting the fleshy spectacle about me. I started, in all sincerity, with "the scarlet whore," the church in which I was reared by mother and to whose bosoms I felt pressed with obscene delight. Though I read Freud and Nietzsche and H. L. Menckin, it was not by this precocious encounter with atheism that I was swayed. That Freud claimed not to have the feeling which his friend described as the "sensation of eternity, a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded, oceanic," merely made me contemptuous of him. I had these feelings. But it was not until I read of them in the jewelled prose of St. Augustine's Confessions that I resolved to quit the Church. For, it seemed to me then, such beauty and such godliness were not to be found at St. Williams in Father Winslow, or at the bingo table, or in the school gymnasium converted into a church, with the altar erected beneath a backboard. The words of St. Augustine filled my heart with disdain for the sweaty pregnant Mother Church as those of no other could do. "And yet I love a kind of light and a kind of melody and a kind of fragrance and a kind of savor and a kind of embracement when I love my God, who is the light and the melody and the fragrance and the savour of my inner man." What had this in common with clumsy priests tripping over their own vestments, bearing the sacred host like a basketball, men who soiled the mysteries with their unwashed hands.

"Jane left the Church, too. I remember at the time asking her about it. But to my questions, full of cerebral zeal and intellectual allusions, she simply replied, 'I don't believe in God.' I fear that, for Jane belief in God was like belief in long skirts, a matter of fashion, and nothing was less fashionable at our age than religion. The Christians among us faced a new inquisition, conducted by the priests of Reason.

"Of course this is no way for a brother to speak, I know. I have often asked myself why I hadn't more love for her. She was pitiful enough, like a butterfly, a yellow butterfly that darts from pond to pond thinking its found the sun there. I talked to her about religion as I said.

"You feel," I asked, "that 'God is dead'?"

I liked to exploit my education.

"Yes," she said.

"And that we have no immortal soul?"

"That is the strange thing," she said, "God has died, but left men their souls. And what was once whole and beautiful in union with God—a swan poised in flight—is now a festering sore."

"*Eine Welt ohne Gott ist unsere*," I said.

"She didn't know German, either."

"I have even learned to accept the dim eyes and shabby passions of men," I continued to Harry, "as the best they have to offer, though I cannot cherish them. Why not Jane's, which were bright? I lost the sensation of eternity some time ago, Harry. I rely on reason to guide me and plot my course by a few dull stars, old nickles. I have often asked myself if I could not have misjudged Jane, if, perhaps, there were not more to her than met the eye—though that was very attractive. She was not without admirers, my sister. Personally, girls of my sister's type never interest me. First of all a man must work. Pleasure is simply the other side of pain. Secondly, I find unappealing the narrow hips and slender waists of girls like Jane. I prefer an ample woman, with an undefined body. The brittle forms with breasts that point somewhere, rather than sloping and rounding to the touch, appeal to my mind. Their mouths are thin and bitter. And yet, Harry, I ask myself if in Jane's gaudy fluttering there could not have been some pattern unknown to me."

"I didn't even know you had a sister," said Harry.

"I haven't seen her in nearly a year," I said.

In my haste and anger I forgot to pack my razor, but to my dismay that night found a box of paper-clips neatly nestled into a pocket of my bag. Outraged vanity carried me on a smelly transit bus to the train station. "Would I care to have flowers sent in my name?" The people on the bus stared at my bag, suspiciously it seemed. I have always felt a sense of guilt when traveling, as though freedom, which is little more than mobility with a ten-caret name, were a sin. Everything about travel has for me a sinful tinge, especially the odor of vagrancy: drunkards and business men, whores and old maids thrown together make a terrible stench. Whenever the odor of urinals and gas fumes breaks in little eddies on my nostrils, it brings with it the sense of motion and of transgression.

At the station I sent a telegram to mother, saying simply, "I am on the way, Gregory." This was no time for reproaches, though it was anger that placed the blue tickets in my hands and that marched me back and forth between the news-stand and the cold gate to the track for an hour, until I saw the train in the distance, being wound in like a reluctant silver fish on the rusted reel of the station. It was still anger that carried me to the outskirts of the city. There, through the watered light of late November, I watched the cemeteries tended by cranes, the mounds of tin and chrome, and the corroding radiators that marked dishevelled graves. Between the metal tombstones grew clumps of flowers and weeds, hideous brown bouquets, like the stubble that grows on the face of a corpse. Here, where the dead lay, surrounding the living, my anger left me.

Mr. Barren was chewing his lower lip vigorously and swinging his skinny leg back and forth.

"America's a barren land," he said, handing me a drink. "No one believes in anything and there's nothing worth believing in. And then again, we're too damn rich. We've got so many cars and televisions we don't know what to do with them. Our possessions own us, like Thoreau said. You're young yet. You college kids are too young to realize. Why, I've often thought of ditching everything and going off to live in the woods."

He spilled some of his drink on the carpet as he gestured toward the woods.

"I've always admired that man. Do you read Thoreau?"

"Yes Sir," I said, "*Walden.*"

"Walden, he said, savoring the name. "That's my dream, every man hi own Walden."

He raised his hand. The thumb was wide and flat, like the head of a hammer "My company's building a development of row homes, Greg, just outside of town What do you think we're calling it?"

"What?" I asked.

"Walden Manors," he said. "What do you think of that?"

"Fine," I said, "good idea."

"My suggestion," he said.

"Jane, dear," mother said. Her voice was always at vespers.

"I'm dressing, Mother," Jane yelled from downstairs.

I excused myself and walked into the kitchen.

"Well, will you put the dishes away before you leave?"

No answer. The oilcloth was full of crumbs, so, after emptying the uneate corn from the serving bowl into the pewter dish and covering it with aluminum foil she rinsed out the green washrag at the sink and proceeded to scrub. The last rays of the sun filtered through the kitchen curtains, lighting up the red squares of the linoleum. Mother's elbows were wrinkled like two large knuckles. The dishes in the yellow rack dried unevenly, streaking.

"Things are so different now, Greg," mother said, "Why, when I was a girl during the depression, there was never enough to eat, yet everyone was cheerful Now, all a child's needs are provided for and its every whim catered to, but you never hear a..."

She stopped and picked with her fingernail at a speck of dried egg-yolk or the oilcloth.

"...or is it just that remembering changes things. I don't know. It does seem that people were more cheerful, though."

Her heart was a bloody cross.

"Lord help us!" she said with a sigh.

Jane entered with a little rush, like a breath of wind. She wore slacks and loafers.

"Come on, handsome," she said.

As we were leaving mother said, "Never mind the dishes. I'll get them."

"Oh...thanks," Jane murmured.

She was gay in the summer, more serious about her fun than any priest before his altar. You would have thought there was something sacred about her amusements, that laughter was her prayer. She pulled and pushed me toward the window, where the stars glittered. The gypsy summoned tickets for us, gay green.

"Let's ride in the last car," she said.

Her face was vivid, and she breathed as though she were dancing to music only she could hear. She sat very still on the leather seat, holding the metal bar in her lap, tense and rapt, waiting for the wheels to spin. There were screams in the green darkness and the murky faces beneath us below the matchstick trestle laughed and leered. Jane's hair was down, her blouse open at the neck. She pressed her small white knees together as we were pulled to the summit. Her eyes were bright as shields, challenging me.

"Raise your hands above your head," she said lifting her arms in a swift free movement.

"Its like death," she cried. She laughed all the way down, falling further below the moon, screaming as we banked above the river, dark and pale, and returned to the tawdry yellow glow.

We rode three more times, each descent wilder and more frightening than the last. At last she relented. Her face grew calm, though her eyes burned deep into my breast.

As we thundered in I could see the fireflies, like dull stars. They had faces like the faces of lepers, grinning at us, their sticky apple hands stuck to the fence, gazing at us from the darkness where their eyes should have been. Jane's dark nut-brown hair was streaked and damp. She brushed it back from her burning coral eyes. She had almost frightened me, but extremes always smack of sham, I had noticed. This was like her drunkenness at parties; there was more will than liquor in it. "We are all too conscious of effect," I had often said, "to spontaneously demonstrate our few genuine emotions. Even the real must wear a little extra finery, a dab of rouge."

"Would you like to see the swans?" she asked

"Yes," I said, greatly relieved.

"What did you mean?" I asked.

"When?"

"As the car plunged. About its being like death."

"Did I say that?" she asked.

"Yes."

"If you didn't feel it, I don't know that I can explain."

She was hoarding up mysteries. Like most women, I thought, she tried to make her feelings unique by hiding them in a vacant little mind and smiling with secret knowledge. Such false delicacies belittled a man, made him feel coarse and blunt.

"Try."

"Didn't you feel a black hand reach out, clumsy fingers bump the back of the car?"

"No."

She laughed, teasing me.

"Nor the moonstones, set like eyes in a cold face, watching us. Jade crossed by a fine thread net of blood?"

"Don't talk nonsense, Jane," I said.

She smiled sadly. A bitter-faced boy proffered a gun.

"Win a doll for the lady, Mr. Win a doll!"

The weight-guesser beckoned with a fat ringed hand.

We sat quietly on the hill and talked and watched the sleeping swan. Suddenly it burst from the water screaming in terror and pain and I saw five dark forms, bending to their shadows, running among the graves. The swan screamed again and blood stained its white wing. Jane's hand gripped my arm like a claw while before us took shape a terrible ritual of violation. The screaming swan, her neck arched like the swaying body of a cobra, dragged her blood-stained wing through the water. Her burning eyes dwelt upon the males bearing down upon her. She swam helplessly in a circle about the bleeding wing, now advancing slowly, now retreating to the far bank toward the gravestones. The males closed with her swiftly. She struck at them

with her beak, terrible and silent in her rage, but they bore her on toward t shifting grasses. Trembling, limping awkwardly now, the five swans stumbl among the weeds and up the bank to the gravestones. They twined their necks abo her, like a knot of snakes, and drew her swooning into the shadows among t graves.

I pulled at Jane's hand.

"Come away," I said.

"It wants to die," she said.

We heard a woman's coarse laughter below us. Her companion grunted the weeds.

Jane looked at me with quenched eyes, as a sister looks to a brother, fc support. On the way home we tried not to talk about the swan. We talked of t future instead.

"I don't expect happiness from marriage," Jane said.

"No," I said, "we are all essentially bachelors and spinsters."

"But it is something to depend on..."

"People make poor walls," I said.

"Won't you marry?" asked Jane.

"I'm odd that way. A woman's kiss reminds me of my mortality. I don' like that."

"So this is my brother," she said.

"Let me help you," I offered. "I will write."

"I don't want your help." A smile trembled on her lips, unsure of itself "Mind your brotherly business."

I stood on the marble steps and watched the winter sun sink into the tree on the horizon, like a copper coin dropped into a slot. Then I opened the door an stepped into the house of death. Friends and relatives waited in line, their lip heavy with condolences for mother. "Such a young, beautiful girl. Tragic.. tragic." They were all trying to live up to the tragedy, trying not to stumble o break wind or accidentally smile. Mr. Peewit, the mortician, glided back an forth among the mourners, arranging the flowers with fleshless, spiritual hands obsequious, apologetic. I saw Raymond something, I think his name was, her bea at the time of the tragedy, looking stifled and confused. Someone leaned toward me.

"What is his name?"

"Whose?"

"The young man over there. Her...friend?"

"Raymond, I think."

"Raymond."

It was a woman talking. She had a gold ring on her finger and two chins.

"Were they in love do you think?"

"I wouldn't know. I didn't know her very well."

I stood in line like the others, dressed like they, and with the same tight, solemn face, the proper attire for grief of a certain extent. I waited quitely and silently, the son, the brother, divided into threes like the rest: at the waist by a belt of a strong brown leather below which I was ashamed, at the neck by a black tie which I had tied in a neat knot. Above my tie I raised in glory my godlike head.

As the line diminished my tie seemed to tighten about my neck and my tongue and lips grew parched, just as they had on approaching the confessional those guilty Saturdays of my youth.

Jane's father walked about while mother received, a pathetic clown with his mawkish handshakes and tentative smiles, thanking everyone and shaking his head up and down as they muttered, "Tragic, tragic."

Mother held herself well. She carried her cross with dignity. She was proud in her carriage if not in her words, and I admired her grave grace; but I was ready if she should weep quietly a moment on my shoulder. I almost expected that she would accuse me, that all her grief would overwhelm her on seeing me, as mine would grip me in its cold, irreverent hand on looking into yer eyes. Suddenly this order and restraint would crumble and the chaos of passionate grief would blind me with tears.

"Gregory " said Mr. Barren.

"Yes, sir."

I called him "sir" in the hope that words of respect would make me respect him; but I could never give this man more than pity.

"A terrible way to meet."

"If only I'd known."

"But how could you?"

"I couldn't."

"When did you hear?"

"A few hours ago. I just got back."

"From school?"

"Yes."

"Thank you for coming," he said, bowing. "Jane's mother will be very glad to see you."

"I only wish there were something I could do."

"Thank you. Thank you."

He accepted my alms and moved on with tentative smile to the woman behind me, the one grieving for Jane's betrothed."

This is Jane, her hair soft as dusk on summer grass, tied with ribbons by mother's dark fingers, her face pale and composed as a letter, and two moist petals, membranes of milk and rose the graveclothes of her eyes. This is my sister. I can see how her dress lingers about her, as though she were not there, arranged like flowers and faith about the empty altar.

Mother had turned to her cousin, a grey formal woman who stood like a pillar, supporting her frail and death-kissed relative. She turned to me and smiling encouragingly with thin lips, extended her bird-boned hand. I looked into her grey eyes, seeking forgiveness. I watched her lips, waiting for a word: "Son." She would take me in her arms and weep upon my breast. All the anguish of her soul would be mine to share.

"Gregory. We haven't seen you in such a long time."

"Mrs. Barren."

"Thank you for coming."

"I only wish..."

"Jane cherished your friendship. Will you help carry..."

"Of course," I hastened to reply.

"Thank you, Gregory."

She turned her back to me then, to attend to the business of mourning and th woman with two chins. Those were the last words she ever addressed to me.

"I know she's in heaven, dear," the woman said.

"Its comforting to think so," Jane's mother said.

They walked about, talking, comforting one another with easy words, with th platitudes that pad the walls of our cells. I was one of six who would bear Jane' coffin to the church, and from there to the grave.

The man in the black dress stood beside the long box, muttering. The woma in the blacker dress knelt on the hard floor with the others. I could not see her face She was hiding it behind a net. There was a marble fence behind the box and th female man. On each side of the dark hall just behind the fence was a metal table, a inclined tray of little fires, each in a separate red glass. Behind the two trays wa a large hole on each side of the wall. On the left side was another female man o plaster standing on a stone box with a long stick in his hands. On the right side wa a thin lady holding a baby in her arms. The walls rose and met at the ceiling. Between them was a large white box that was flat on top supporting brass holder arranged in order. In the holders were tall white sticks. In the middle of the bo was a small red curtain, the size of a man's handkerchief. Through the crack i the curtain I could see what looked like a brass door. Above the large box were tw pieces of wood nailed together like the armyard of a ship. A skinny man full o nails hung from the armyard, like a human sail, the sail of the stone building. I d not think that little sail can hold enough wind to move this ship of stone.

The woman with the black net over her face asked me to help carry in the big box the female man is talking to like a magician. She seems to think my sister is in that box. I humor her in this delusion. If she were in that box I would not have helped to bring her here. She would not have liked this religious place.

He seemed a well-meaning brute. Raymond Falk was his full name, but I don't think he remembered me. As we approached the hearse, I felt that he was my enemy, and that there was to be a struggle between us. When they opened the door, the six of us, three on each side, approached. I was in the middle on the right side. He was directly in front of me. As he grasped the bronze handle of the pall I stepped past him, placing my hand at the farther end in order to bear the weight there. He looked down at me in dumb bewilderment and then in anger. The others were watching us. Suddenly he grasped my arm in his massive hand and wrenched me loose. As he frowned and glowered at me I took my original place and when they carried the box to the grave I held more or less superfluously to the metal rail.

I could still hear the heavy final sound of earth striking the box. The spades rang in my ears. I wrapped my overcoat tightly about my body and leaned against the cold wind, waiting while it blew the stiff flowers out across the frozen sod. Finally the night came to hide the brown winter stubble that passed for grass and to rest like a blanket across Jane's grave. Downstream, the amusement park was silent, without lights. Only the moon shone upon a broken swan, its wing stained with dry blood. Forlorn and beautiful, it seemed to yearn for death beneath the perfect stars.

I live with my aging father now, in our home not far from the sea. My mother left him some time ago, and I can't in all truthfulness say that we really miss her. There is a pond behind the house beneath three tall cedars. I often read there beside it, and whenever I think of Jane, which I not infrequently do, I think of her as the guardian of my pond of dark water and of my afternoons and silent, leaf-filled evenings.

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